

marting cing  
dango

A  
MOST LEARNED  
AND PIOVS TREA-

tise, full of Diuine and

*Humane Philoso-  
phy, framing a  
Ladder,*

WHERBY OVR MINDES

May Ascend to God, by the

*Stepps of his  
Creatures.*

*Written in Latine by the illustrious  
and learned Cardinall Bellar-  
mine, of the society of  
Jesus. 1615.*

Translated into English,  
By T. B. Gent.

*Blessed is the man that hath disposed  
ascensions in his heart. Plal. 83.*

Printed at Doway Anno  
Domini. 1616.

MOST LIBERALLY

AND HIGHLY

WORTHY



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THE TRANSLATOR  
To the Reader.

A T the request of one  
that might cōmand,  
I tooke in hand the  
*Translation* of this booke.  
The *Subiect* therof, is the  
*Summum bonum* or *Highest*  
*Happinesse* of this life: for  
it teacheth vs a compen-  
dious way by the *Steppes*  
of *Creatures* to ascend vn-  
to the Creator, and now  
on *earth* to bee linked to  
him in *Love*, that hereaf-  
ter in heaven we may be  
vnited to him in *glory*.  
Of the Authors *Worth* I

A 2 will

*The Translator*

Salust. In  
Bello Iu-  
gurth.  
Fol. 76.

will say with *Salust* begin-  
ning the Description of  
the Cittie *Carthage*: *De*  
*Carthagine Siler e Melius pu-*  
*to, quam parum dicere.* Of  
*Carthage* I thinke it better to  
say nothing, then to speake  
sparingly. But if *Vertue*  
and *Truth* appeare best  
apparelled, when they are  
most naked: then are they  
heere sett forth in their  
*Hollydaie attyre.* *Diuine*  
and *Humane* Philosophy  
also (like the *Sunne* and  
*Moone* in one *Hemisphere*)  
shine here both together,  
and cast their beames vp-  
pon all that are desirous  
to

*To the Reader.*

to receaue *Light* or *Life*  
from their heate. If I  
haue committed any neg-  
ligence in the *action* of my  
part, I desire thy friendly  
censure, and to remem-  
ber that *Voces Artis* (of  
which there are many in  
this booke) are *strangers*  
to our language, and  
cannot be made *Denizens*,  
but by prescription.

*vale*

*It is the sweetest note that man  
can sing,  
When grace tunes natures Key  
to vertues string.*



TO THE MOST  
HONORABLE AND  
*Reuerend Prelate Peter Aldo-  
brandine, Cardinall of the holy  
Roman Church, Robert  
Bellarmine Cardinall  
sendeth greeting.*

IN September last by  
Gods assistance, I fini-  
shed as I was able, a  
Booke *Of the ascension of  
the minde vnto God by the  
stepps of his Creatures.* For  
hauing abandoned all o-  
ther cares, I made choise  
to spend that Month by  
Licence of his *Holinesse,*  
in diuine contemplation.

*The Authors Epistle*

And albeit I writt it onely for my priuate vse: yet through the perswasions and aduise of friends; I haue published it, and made it appeare vnder the protection of your name. For no sort of men may take more profit thereby (if it shall profit any) then those which are most occupied in publique affaires, especially Prelats of the Church: Among whom you are not inferior vnto any; being a Cardinal, an Archbishop, and Chamberlaine of the holy *Roman Church,*

*Dedictory.*

*Church, and a Protector and President of the Generall Inquisition.* An other cause also why I Dedicate this booke vnto you, is to leaue vnto the memory of posteritie some Monument of your great benefits vnto me, and of my thankfulness vnto you therefore. Neither doe I doubt that the smallnesse thereof will make it lesse grateful vnto you: for bookes are not to be esteemed by the multitude of their leaues: but by the fruitfulnessse of the matter whereof they

*The Authors Epistle*

treate. As for this book  
how others will censure  
it I knowe not: but to me  
it hath prooued more  
profitable then my other  
workes: For which cause  
I vse not to reade my o-  
ther bookes but vpon ne-  
cessitie: but this booke  
I haue willingly read o-  
uer three or foure times,  
and purpose hereafter to  
read it often. Although  
perhapps not the desert  
thereof, but affection  
maketh it dearer vnto  
me; because I haue be-  
gotten it like an other  
*Beniamin* in my last olde  
age.



*Dedicatorie.*

age. Receaue therefore  
most *Worthy Cardinal* this  
small present from me as  
a testimonie of my due  
obseruancie toward you:  
And as a Monitor execu-  
ting his Charge; that  
when the troubles of  
businesse ouermuch op-  
presse you, and seeke to  
hinder you from your  
accustomed houres of  
prayer vnto God: it  
may modestly remember  
you to lay aside for a  
while all such affaires,  
and to withdrawe your  
minde vnto those inward  
and vsuall ioyes, that by  
reading

*Epistle Dedicatorie.*

reading and meditating  
you may see *That our Lord*  
*is God*, to wit, the onely  
true, highest, and ever-  
lasting happinesse, in ob-  
taining or loosing wher-  
of, mans greatest fe-  
licitie or misery  
doth consist.

\* \* \*

The Preface of the  
Author.

**T**He holy Scripture doth  
admonish vs, to seeke  
God diligently. For al-  
though God is not farre from  
euery one of vs, For in him  
we liue, and mooue, and be,  
As the Apostle saith: yet wee  
are farre from God, so that  
vnesse we daily dispose our  
hearies to ascend, and make for  
our selues a Ladder vnto hea-  
uen, and with great labour seeke  
God, we shall with the Prodi-  
gall Sonne, feede Swine in a  
country, far off from our Fa-  
ther and home.

And that we may briefly de-  
clare how these things may stand  
together, to wit, that God is not  
farre

Act. 17

Luke 15

## The Preface

*farre from vs: And yet we are  
farre from him; we say, that  
God is not farre from vs, be-  
cause he alwaies seeth vs, be-  
fore whose eyes all things are  
present: He alwaies thinketh of  
vs, because He hath care  
of vs; He alwaies toucheth  
vs, because Hee carrieth all  
thinges by the word of his  
power; But we are farre from  
God, because we see not God,  
neither can we see him, For he  
inhabiteth light not accessi-  
ble: neither are we sufficient  
to thinke any thing of God  
of our selues, as of our selues.  
Much lesse are we able to touch  
him, and cleaue to him with pi-  
ous affection, vlesse his right  
hand receiue and drawe vs vn-  
to him. And therefore David  
when*

## The Preface.

when he had said : My soule hath cleaued after thee, presently added, Thy right hand hath receiued me. Neither are we onely farre from God : because wee cannot see him, nor easily thinke of him, nor with affection cleaue vnto him : but also because being busied about temporall goods, with the which we are compassed and ouerwhelmed ; we very easily forget God, and with a drie hart we scarcely with our tongue sound his name in Psalmes and sacred prayers.

This therefore is the cause, why the holy Ghost doth in the holy Scripture (as we said euen now) so often admonish vs to seeke God : Seeke God and your Soule shall liue. And Seeke his face alwaies. And Our

Psal. 62

Psal. 61

Psal. 104

## The Preface.

Lamen. 3

Isay 49

Wisd. 1

Deut 4

Our Lord is good to them that hope in him, to the soule that seeketh him. *And* seeke our Lord whilst he may be found. *And*, In simplicitie of hart seeke him. *And*, when thou shalt seeke God, thou shalt finde him: yet so, if thou seeke him with all thy hart.

*But although this diligence in seeking God, belong vnto all the faithfull: yet it most properly appertaineth vnto the Prelates of the Church, as St. Augustine, St. Gregorie, St. Bernard and other holy Fathers doe witnesse. For they plainly write, that a Prelate cannot proffit both himselfe and others, vntlesse he diligently applie himselfe vnto the Meditation of diuine matters, & the reparation*

*of*

## The Preface.

*of his owne minde St. Augustine in his booke of the Cittie of God saith: Ocium Sanctum querit charitas veritatis, &c.* The loue of truth seeketh holy rest: the necessitie of Charitie vndertaketh iust busines; but neither is the delight of truth to be altogether forsaken, least the sweetnes thereof being withdrawne, the necessitie of busines oppresse.

*And the same St. Augustine speaking in his Confessions of himselfe, and of his frequent Meditation of God by creatures saith: Sepe illud facio, &c.* I often doe this: It delighteth me, and when I can be spared from my necessarie busines, I haue recourse vnto this pleasure. *St. Gregorie in his*

19 Ciu. 19

10. Conf.  
c. 40.

## The Preface.

2. par. Pa-  
stor. 5

*his booke of pastorall Charge  
saith: Sit Rector &c. Let a  
Prelate be equall vnto any in  
compassion, and before all in  
contemplation, that through  
the bowels of pietie he may  
transferr the infirmities of o-  
thers vnto himselfe, and by  
the height of Contemplation  
in seeking after things inuisi-  
ble, he may exceed himselfe.  
And St. Gregorie in the same  
place, bringeth the example of  
Moyles and Christ. For Moy-  
ses often went into the Taberna-  
cle and came out; He went in,  
that he might contemplate Gods  
Secrets; he came out, that hee  
might beare with the infirmities  
of his neighbours. And Christ  
himselfe in the day time, by prea-  
ching and working miracles,  
sought*



## The Preface.

sought the saluation of his neighbours, but the night hee passed ouer without sleepe in prayer and contemplation. For he passed (saith St. Luke) the whole night in the prayer of God. Many things also like vnto these may be read in the last chapter of the same booke.

Luke 6

Moreouer St. Bernard to admonish seriously Pope Eugenius who was sometime his scholler, not to giue himselfe wholly to action, but sometime euery day to recollect himselfe, and to enioy holy rest and heauenly foode, writ fine bookes of Consideration; in the which he doth not onely exhort him vnto the daily Meditation of diuine things; but also doth plainely teach him the manner & method  
how

## The Preface.

how to meditate, and by Meditation to ascend, and by ascension to unite himselfe unto God in understanding and affection. Neither doth he admit that excuse which he might have pretended, and which many now a dayes pretend; to wit, that the over-many businesses wherewith the office of a Bishop is accompanied, would not afford him leisure enough to apply himselfe unto the meditation of divine things. For none truly ought to give himselfe so wholly to outward businesses, but that he may take sometime to strengthen his body with meate drinke and sleepe. And if the body doe duely require this refectiō and rest, with how much more reason doth the soule require her meate and rest? neither

## The Preface.

neither can she without this reflection, truly execute her office by any means, amidst the incumbrances of so many great affaires. But the meate of the soule is prayer, and her rest is contemplation, by the which Ascensions are framed in the hart, That the God of Gods may be seene in Syon; as much as in this vaile of teares he maybe seene.

Psal. 83

But wee mortall men (as it seemeth) can finde no other Ladder whereby to ascend vnto God, but by the workes of God: For those who by the singular gift of God, haue (by an other way) beene admitted into Paradise to heare Gods Secrets, which it is not lawfull for a man to speake; are not said to  
haue

## The Preface.

2 Cor. 12

have Ascended, but to have bene wrapt. Which St. Paul doth plainly confesse of himselfe, when he saith, I was wrapt into Paradiſe: and I heard ſecret wordes, which it is not lawfull for a man to ſpeake.

Wiſd. 13  
Rom. 1

And that a man may by the workes of God, that is, by Creatures aſcend unto the knowledge and loue of the Creator, the booke of Wiſdome doth teach, and the Apoſtle to the Romans, and reaſon it ſelfe doth ſufficiently confirme, ſince the efficient cauſe may be knowne by the effects, and the example by the Image: neither can there be any doubt, but that all creatures are the workes of God, and that men and Angels, are not onely his workes but alſo his Images, as the

## The Preface.

*the holy Scripture teacheth vs.*

*I therefore being moued by  
these reasons, hauing obtained  
some small vacancie from pub-  
lique affaires, and admonished  
by the example of St. Bonauen-  
ture, who in the like vacancie  
writ a booke intituled The Pil-  
grimage of the minde vnto  
God; haue essayed from the  
contemplation of creatures, to  
make a Ladder by the which we  
may in some sort ascend vnto  
God. And I haue deuised it  
into fifteene Stepps, in resem-  
blance of the fifteene stepps by  
the which they went vp into  
the Temple of Salomon,  
and of the fifteene Psalmes  
which are called  
Gradualles.*





I

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THE FIRST  
STEEPP.

*From the Consideration of  
Man.*

**I**F any one true-  
ly desire to e-  
rect a *Ladder*  
vnto God, he  
ought to begin  
from the consideration of  
himselſe. For euery one of  
vs, is both the creature and  
image of God, and nothing  
is nearer vs then our ſelues.

Therefore not without  
cauſe *Moyſes* ſaith : *Attende  
tibi, Attend to thy ſelfe*; vp-  
on which two wordes *Baſil*  
B the

Cap. 1.

the great writte an excellent sermon. For he that shall truly behold himselfe, and consider what is within him, shall finde as it were an *Abridgement* of the whole world, whereby he may easily ascend vnto the maker of all things.

But I at this present, intend to seeke out nothing els but the foure common causes; who is my maker, of what matter he made me, what forme he gaue me, and to what end hee produced me. For if I seeke my maker, I shall finde him onely God; If I seeke the matter whereof he made me, I shall finde it nothing; whence I gather, whatsoeuer is in me is made  
by



by God, and the whole to be  
of God; if I seeke my forme  
I shall finde my selfe to be the  
Image of God: If I seeke my  
end, I shall finde that the same  
God is my *Cheife and totall*  
*happinesse*. Therefore I may  
vnderstand, there is so great a  
coniunction and nearenesse  
of my selfe with God, that he  
onely is my maker, my auctor  
my Father, my example, my  
happinesse, and my *All*. And  
if I vnderstand this, how can  
it be but that I should most  
ardently seeke him? thinke of  
him? sigh for him? desire to  
see and embrace him? and de-  
test the great blindenes of my  
hart, which so long time hath  
desired, sought, or thought  
of nothing lesse then of God

Cap. 2.

who onely is *All* vnto me?  
But let vs consider more diligently euery particular : I aske thee O my soule, who gaue thee being when as a little time before thou wast nothing? surely the parents of thy flesh begot thee not; for what is borne of flesh is flesh; but thou art a spirit: neither did heauen or earth, or the Sunne or starres produce thee; for those are bodies, thou without body: nor yet could Angels, Arch-angels, or any other spirituall creature be causes of thy being, for thou art not made of any matter, but created of nothing: And none but *God almightie* can make something

*thing of nothing.*

He therefore alone without companion, without helpe, with his owne handes which are his vnderstanding and will, created thee when hee pleased.

But perhappes not God, but creatures produced thy body, that as thy soule must acknowledge God, so thy body must acknowledge thy parents for authors: It is not so; For although God vse the means of parents to begette the flesh, as inferiour workemen in the buylding of a house; yet is he the cheife buylder, *Author*. and true father both of the soule and  
B 3 body,

body, and so would be said to be the beginning of mans whole essence: For if the parents of thy flesh were the true Authors, and as it were the Cheife framers of thy body; they would know how many muscelles, vaines, synnowes, bones; how many humors, how many turnings, and how many other things of like kinde there are in mans body, all which they are ignorant of, vnlesse perhaps they haue learned them by the art of Anatomie.

Moreouer when the body is sicke, or a member withered or cut off, they could certainly by the same art by which they made it, againe repaire it, if they were the  
true

true Authors : euen as those which make clockes or build houses, know how to order and repayre them. But parents know not how to doe any of these thinges. The coniunction also of the soule with the body, which is a speciall part of the affection of mans nature, can be done by none but by a workeman of infinite power. For by what art but by diuine, can a spirit be ioyned with flesh in so neere a bond as to be made one substance? For the body hath no proportion or likeness with the spirit. *He therefore did it, who alone doth great wonders.*

*Psal. 135*

Truly therefore doth the holy ghost speake by *Moyse*

- Deut. 23 in *Deuteronomie* : Nonne ipse est &c. Is not hee thy father that hath possessed thee, and made and created thee? And by
- Iob. 10 *Iob* : With Skinne and Fleesh thou hast cloathed me : with bones and Sinnowes thou hast compacted me, And by the
- Psal. 118 *kingly Prophet* : Thy bandes haue made me and formed me, and againe : Thou hast formed me and hast put thy hand vpon me. And the most wise
- Psal. 138 *inoother of the Machabean children*, I knowe not how
- 1 Mac. 7 *you appeared in my wombe* : for neither did I giue you Spirit and Soule and life, and the members of euery one, I my selfe framed not : but indeede the Creator of the world, that hath formed the Natinitie  
of

of man, and that inuented the  
origine of all.

Hereupon surely the wis-  
dome of God Christ our Lord  
said: *Call none father to your  
selues vppon earth: For one is  
your father he that is in heauen.*

Math. 22

By which admonition St.  
Augustine said to God of his  
sonne *Adoptatus* whome he  
had begot in fornication: *Tu  
bene feceras &c. Thou didst  
make him well, but I beside sin  
had nothing in that childe.*

9. Confes-  
s. 6

Goe to now my soule,  
if God be thy Author, and  
thy bodyes also; if he bee  
thy Father, Supporter, and  
Nursse: if what thou art  
is of him: if what thou  
hast, thou receiuest from  
him: and what thou ho-

B c

pest

Psal. 59.

pest thou expectest from him: why dost thou not glory in such a parent? why dost thou not loue him with all thy hart? why dost thou not for his sake contemne all earthly things? why dost thou suffer vaine desires to ouer-rule thee? Lift vp thine eyes to him, feare not thine enemies on earth, since thou hast a father *Almighty* in heauen. With what confidence and affection (thinkest thou) did *Dauid* say? *I am thine, saue me.* O my soule if thou wouldest consider that the almightie and everlasting God (who wanteth none of thy goods, and if thou perish hee loseth nothing) turneth not his eyes from thee, but so loueth, protecteth,



protecteth, directeth and cherisheth thee, as if thou were his greatest treasure; surely thou wouldest onely hope in him, thou wouldest feare him as thy Lord, and loue him as thy Father; neither should any temporall good or euill, seperate thee from his loue.

Let vs come to the matter whereof man is made. Truely it is most base; but it giueth vs thereby the greater occasion to humble our selues, which is a vertue in this life very profitable and rare, and therefore the more precious, & to be desired. And surely of the matter of our soules there can be no doubt, but that it is

*That Nothing* then the which what can be imagined more

vacant

Cap. 3.

vacant and vile? The immediate matter of the body, what is it but menstruous blood? a thing so impure, as our eyes refuse to see, our hands to touch, & our mindes to thinke of. The matter whereof the first man was made, what was it but red and barren earth, or dust & slime?

Gen. 2

*Formauit Deus, &c.* God formed man (saith the Scripture) *of the slime of the earth*, and againe, God said to man: *Dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt returne.*

Gen. 3

Wherefore the Patriarch *Abraham* remembering his vnworthinesse, said vnto God: *Because I haue once begunne, I wil speak to my Lord, whereas I am dust and ashes.* But yet here is not

Gen. 18

an

an end of the basenesse of this matter : for that dust or slime proceeded not from an other matter , but from nothing : In the beginning God created heauen and earth ; and surely not of another heauen and earth , but of Nothing : so that whether we consider the soule or body , it is reduced to *Nothing* from whence this proud creature Man proceeded. Hee hath nothing therefore to boast of , but what he receiued from God. Truly the workes of Men , which proceede either from witte or labour , haue euer somewhat of themselves , whereof if they had vnderstanding , they might glory against their maker.

Fo

Gal. 6

Cor. 4

For a vessell of gold, a chest of wood, a house of Iuory or Marble, if they could speake, might say to him that made them; to thee I owe my forme but not my matter; and more pretious that is, which from my selfe I haue, then what I receiued from thee. But man who hath nothing from himselfe, nor is any thing of himselfe, can not glory in any thing. And most truely saith the Apostle: *If any man esteeme himselfe something, whereas he is nothing, he seduceth himselfe. And, What hast thou that thou hast not receiued? and if thou hast receiued, what dost thou glory as if thou hadst not receiued? Whereunto St. Cyprian agreeth when he saith:*

*In nullo*

*In nullo gloriandum quando nostrum nihil est. We must glory in nothing, since nothing is ours. But thou wilt say, men do many worthy works, for which they are deseruedly praised, that vertue praised may increase. It is so: but let the glory be to God not to themselves, as it is written: He that glorieth, let him glory in our Lord. And, My soule sha'l be praised in our Lord. For I aske, when a man doth some excellent worke, of what matter doth he make it? by what vertue, and by whose direction and help doth he it? surely of a matter which God not man created, and by that vertue which God gaue vnto him, & not he to himselfe: by*  
 Gods

Lib. 3 ad  
 Quirins.

4.

a Cor. 10

Psal. 33

Gods direction and help also he doth it, without which he could doe no good. *For God doth many good things in Man without Man; but Man doth no good which God doth not cause Man to doe,* as it is said in the second *Arausian* Councell c.20. God therefore doth vouchsafe to vse the ministry of man in doing good, the which he could doe without him, that Man may thereby acknowledge himselfe, more indebted vnto God, and not be proude of himselfe, but glory in our Lord. Therefore my soule if thou be wise, sit downe alwaies in the lowest place; steale not Gods glory neither in little nor in much; descend  
to

to thy *Nothing* which onely  
is thine, & all the world can-  
not make thee proud. But be-  
cause this pretious vertue of  
humility was almost gon out  
of the world, and not to be  
found either in the bookes of  
the Philosphers, or manners  
of the Gentiles: the master of  
humilitie came from heaven,  
*And when he was in the forme*  
*of God, equall to the Father, he*  
*exinanited himselfe taking the*  
*forme of a seruāt, & he humbled*  
*himselfe made obedient vnto*  
*death.* And to Mankinde he  
said: *Learne of me, because I am*  
*meeke & humble of hart, & you*  
*shall finde rest to your soules.*  
wherfore my soule, if perhaps  
thou art ashamed to imitate ſy  
humility of men; yet be not  
ashamed

Phil. 2

Mat. 11

Iam. 4.

Cap 4.

ashamed to imitate the humilitie of God who deceaueth not, *nor can be deceaued*: And *who resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.*

It followeth now that we consider the forme which is the third cause. And truly by how much the matter whereof man is made is more base; by so much the forme giuen to man, is more excellent. I omit the outward shape of his body which surpasseth all earthly liuing creatures in feature: yet that is not his substantiall, but accidentall Forme. For his substantiall forme, which maketh him a man distinguished from other liuing creatures, is his immortall soule indued with reason



reason and free will, which is Gods Image, made to his owne likenes.

For so we reade that God said when he made man : *Let vs make man to our Image and likenes : And let him haue dominion ouer the fishes of the Sea, and the Fowles of the ayre, and the beastes, and the whole earth, and all creeping creatures vpon the earth.* Man therefore is Gods Image, not because of his body, but of his soule; for God is a *Spiritu*, not a body. *Et ibi est imago dei, &c.* And there is the Image of God (saith St. Basill) *where that is which commandeth ouer other liuing creatures.* But man commandeth ouer beastes, not by the members of his body,

Gen. I.

Hom. in  
exam. 10

body, the which are stronger in many beastes then in Man; but by his minde endued with reason and free-will; For not by that which hee hath cōmon with them doth he rule them; but by that whereby he is distinguished from them, and made like vn-to God.

Lift vp thy minde my soule to thy example, and remember that the cheife commendation of the Image, is to be like thereunto. For although the example be deformed (as the Deuil is vsually made) yet the commendation of the image, is aptly to represent that deformed example. Therefore deformity in the example shall still be deformity; but in  
the

the image it shall be beautie. And if the example also be beautifull; the image shall be most pretious, if it imitate (as neere as may be) the beautie thereof: the image likewise if it had vnderstanding, would desire nothing more, then continually to beholde the example, to fashion and frame it selfe to become most like thereunto.

Thy example O my soule is God an infinite beautie; *A light in whome there is no darkenesse*; whose beautie the Sunne and Moone admire. That thou mayst therefore imitate an example of such beautie, and desire as much as thou canst to be like him, (wherein

1 Ioh. c. 1

(wherein consisteth thy highest perfection, profit, honor, ioy, rest and happinesse) consider that the beauty of God thy example consisteth in *Wisdom*e and *Holines*. For as the beauty of the body ariseth from proportion of members, and an amiable colour: so in the beauty of the minde, an amiable colour is the *Light of Wisdome*: and the proportion of members is *Iustice*: but by *Iustice* no particular vertue is vnderstood; but that vniuersall which comprehendeth all vertues. That soule therefore is most beautifull, whose minde doth shine with the light of *Wisdom*e; and whose will is confirmed in the fullnes

nes of perfect Justice.

But God thy example  
(O my soule) is *Wisdom* and  
*Justice*, and therefore *Beautie*  
*it selfe*. And because both  
this goodnesse is signified by  
the name of *Holinesse* in the  
Scriptures, therefore in *Isay*  
the Angels crye vnto God:  
*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of*  
*Sabaoth*, And God himselfe  
cryeth vnto his Images: *Be*  
*you holy, because I your Lord*  
*God am holy*. And our Lord  
in the Gospell: *Be you per-*  
*fect, as your heavenly Father is*  
*perfect*.

*Isay 6.*

*Leuit. 11*

*Math 6.*

If therefore thou desire  
(O my soule) as the true  
image of God to be like thy  
example; thou must loue  
*Wisdom* and *Justice* before all  
things.

things. It is true *Wisdom*e to iudge of all things according to the highest cause: the highest cause is the will of God, or the law which doth make knowne the will of God vnto men. Therefore if thou loue *Wisdom*e thou must not in any wise giue eare what the lawe of the flesh doth teach, what the senses doe esteeme, what the world doth approue, what thy kindstolks perswade, and much lesse what flatterers propound; but be deafe vnto them all, and onely attend the will of thy Lord God, iudging that wholly good, profitable, glorious, and to be desired of thee, which is according therunto. This is the *Wisdom*e  
of

of Saints whereof the wiseman writeth : *Above health and beauty did I loue her, and purposed to haue her for light, because her light cannot be extinguished. And all good things came to me together with her.*

Wisd. 7

Moreouer Iustice is an other part of spirituall beautie, and comprehendeth all vertues which adorne and perfect the Will, but especially Charitie the Mother & Roote of vertues. Whereof St. Augustine in his last booke of Nature and grace speaketh thus : *Inchoata charitas, &c. vnperfect charitie, is vnperfect iustice : Charitie increased, is iustice increased: Perfect Charitie, is perfect Iustice: For, He*  
C that

De Natura &amp; gratia. c. 70

Rom. 13 *that loneth hath fulfilled the law because, Love worketh not euil: And therefore, Love is the fulnesse of the Lawe, as the Apostle taught.*

1 Iohn 25 *And againe, He that keepeth his word, to wit, his commandements, in him in very deed the charitie of God is perfected as St. Iohn speaketh. Those therefore which will be like the diuine example, ought to obey him that saith: Be ye therefore followers of God, as most deare Children, and walke in Love. For the sonne is the Image of the Father, and the chiefe commendation of an Image (as wee said before) is to be like the example.*

Ephe. 5

O my soule, that thou  
wouldst



wouldest truly vnderstand these things, and be like thy example in beautye of true Wisdome and Iustice; then shouldst thou please the eyes of the *Highest King*: how great peace then shouldst thou enioy? how wouldest thou reioyce? how quickly wouldest thou contemne all worldly delights? And on the other side, if thou wouldest consider, how greatly God is offended, to see his Image destitute of the *Light of Wisdome*, and *Beauty of Iustice*, to be poluted, defiled, and darkened, and Man that was placed in such honour, as to be like vnto God, *Now to be compared to beastes without vnderstanding, and to become*

Psal. 48

2 Cor. 5

*like vnto them*, surely thou couldest not but quake, tremble, and be vnquiet, vntil thou hadst washed away all thy spottes with floudes of teares flowing from deepe contrition, and spedily returne to the likenes of thy most beautifull example. And because while thou art a Pilgrim on earth, and *dost walke by Faith, and not by Sight*, thou doest continually want the helpe of thy Lord God, aswell to remaine in the likenes thou hast already, as also dayly to become more like; that is, more bright and beautifull; Sigh therefore from the bothome of thy hart to God, and say vnto him: *O holy and most mercifull Lord*, whom it hath pleased to  
make

make this my soule thy Image; make *Perfect* I beseech thee thy saide Image, increase in it Wisdome and Iustice, hyde it in thy secret Tabernacle, that it be not defiled with the slime of carnall concupiscence, smoake of worldly honour, or dust of earthly thoughts. Hetherto of the forme.

There remaineth then the last cause, which is the end. The end wherefore man was created, is no other but God himselfe. But because the end is twofold, the one intrinsecall, the other externall, let vs briefly consider each of them apart. The intrinsecal end of euery thing is the perfect estate to which it can come. As the

Cap. 5

intrinsecall end of a pallace is the perfect finishing thereof: for then it is said to be ended, when as nothing belonging to the building is wanting: The intrinsecall end of a tree is the most perfect estate which the nature therof doth require: For then a tree may be said to haue attained its end, when it spreadeth the boughes, bringeth forth leaues, is beautified with blossomes, and soone after loaded with ripe fruite. Man therefore who is created to a most high end, may then also be said to haue attained his end, when as his minde shall see God as he is, and in him knowe all things; his will shall enioy the chiefe happinesse

nesse most ardently loued; and his body being qualified with the glorious giiftes of immortallitie, impassibilitie, and the like; shall obtaine perpetuall rest and ioy. And because the sight of God is the essence of this finall happinessse, by which we which are the images of God must obtaine a most perfect estate by the resemblance of our diuine example; therefore St. Iohn writeth: *Now we are the* 1 Iohn 3  
*sonnes of God: and it hath not yet appeared, what we shall bee. we knowethat when he shall appeare, we shall be like to him: because wee shall see him as he is.*

O my soule, if thou couldest conceaue what this meaneth:

We shall be like to him, because we shall see him as he is, how soone would all the cloudes of earthly thoughtes be dispersed? God is most happy, and therefore most happy, because he doth alwaies behold himselfe as he is, and doth enioy himselfe most cleerely scene, and most ardently loued from all eternitie. Of this inestimable good, he would haue thee also partaker with the Angels. To this most high and happy end he created thee, which is signified by that saying: *Enter into the ioy of thy Lord*, That is, Be partaker of the ioy which God himselfe doth enioy. And againe, *I dispose to you, as my father disposed to me a kingdome:*

Math. 25,

Luc. 22

kingdome : that you may eate  
and drinke vpon my table in my  
kingdome, That is, I make you  
partakers of my kingdome,  
and kingly table, that you  
may enioy that honour,  
powre, and pleasure, which I  
and God my Father enioy.  
And who is able to conceaue  
what is the honour, powre,  
pleasure and happinesse of  
God ? truely if any would  
but in thought and hope as-  
cend vnto the Highnes of  
our end; he would be asha-  
med to contend for the pos-  
session of this earth, to grieue  
for any temporall losse, or to  
ioy for any temporall gaine.  
He would I say be ashamed  
to be a fellow in the pleasures  
of beastes, who is made a

companion of Angels, and a partaker of Gods friendship and of his inestimable delights, *For all things among friends are common.*

But now the externall end of euery thing, is that for which it is made. The end of a pallace is the dweller therein : the end of a tree is the possessor thereof : the end of man is onely his Lord God. For of his owne, and for himselfe he made Man, and he keepeth, feedeth, and payeth him his wages. Therefore iustly doth he command and say : *The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and him onely shalt thou serue.* But mark diligently O my soule ; The things which are made for man, are profitable



profitable to man, and not to  
themselues; beastes labour  
for man, and not for them-  
selues; the fieldes, vineyards,  
and Orchards, fill the grana-  
ries, sellars, and purses of  
men; neither doe seruants la-  
bour, sweate, and toyle for  
themselues, but for the profit,  
ease, and pleasure of their  
masters. But thy Lord God  
who wanteth nothing, would  
haue man truely serue him,  
and yet the profit and reward  
of his seruice he will not  
haue. *O Lord sweet and milde  
and of much mercy,* who would  
not serue thee with all his  
hart if once he begin to taste  
a little the sweetnesse of thy  
gouernment? What O Lord  
dost thou command thy ser-  
uants?

psal. 85

Math. 11

uants? *Take* (thou sayst) *my yoake upon you.* And what is thy yoake? *My yoake* (saith he) *is sweete, and my burthen light.* Who would not willingly carry a yoake that doth not punish but comfort, and a burthen that doth not weary but refresh? Not without cause therefore doth he adde, *And ye shall finde rest to your soules.* And what is this yoake which wearieth not, but bringeth rest?

Math. 22

Truely that first and greatest commandement; *Loue the Lord thy God from thy whole hart.* And what is more easie pleasant and delightfull, then to loue goodnesse, beautie, and excellencie it selfe, which thou  
art

art O my Lord God? Thy  
seruant *Dauid* iudged right  
who esteemed thy com-  
maundements, *To be desired*  
*aboue golde and much preti-*  
*ous stone : and more sweete*  
*aboue hony, and the hony*  
*Combe.* And he added. *And*  
*in keeping them is much re-*  
*ward.* What meaneth this  
O Lord? dost thou promise  
reward to those that keepe  
thy commandements *To be*  
*desired aboue golde, and more*  
*sweete then the hony Combe?*  
Yestruely, a most ample re-  
ward, for *Iames* thy Apostle  
saith: *Our Lord hath prepa-*  
*red a Crowne of life for those*  
*that loue him.* And what is a  
Crown of Life? Truely a grea-  
ter Happinesse then we are  
able

Psal. 18

Iam. 4

1. Cor. 2  
1<sup>st</sup> Lay 64

able to conceiue. For so speaketh St. Paul out of *Isay*: *Eye hath not seene, nor eare hath heard, neither hath it ascended into the heart of Man, what things God hath prepared for them that loue him.* Surely therfore there is great reward for keeping thy commandements. Neither is that first & greatest cōmandement profitable onely to man obeying, & not to God commanding: but also the rest of Gods commandements do perfect, beautifie, instruct and illuminate the obedient, and finally make them good and happy. Therefore my soule if thou be wise vnderstand that thou art created to Gods glorie, and thy eternall happinesse; that  
is

is thy end, that is thy treasure and center; if thou come to that end, thou shalt be happy, if thou declyne from it, thou art vnhappy. Therefore think that assuredly good for thee, which directeth thee to that end: and that assuredly euill which causeth thee to decline from it. Prosperitie and aduerfitie, wealth and pouertie, health and sicknesse, honour and ignominy, life and death, of a wise man are neither to be desired nor auoyded; but if they make to Gods glorie, and thy eternall welfare, they are good, and to be desired: if they hinder it, they are euill and to be auoyded.

THE

## THE SECOND STEPP,

*From the Consideration of the  
greater world.*

Cap. I

WE haue framed the first Stepp of our Ladder of *Ascension* vnto God, from the Consideration of Man, who is called the *Lesser World*: Now we also purpose to frame the *Second Stepp*, from the Consideration of this most great corporall quantitie, commonly called the *Greater world*. St. Gregory Nazianzen writeth in his second sermon of the Pasche, *That God placed Man as a great world in a lesser world;* which

which is true if we separte  
Angels from the world: For  
man is greater then the whole  
corporall world, not in quan-  
titie but in qualitie: but if  
that Angels are comprehen-  
ded in the world, as we in  
this place comprehend them:  
then is man a *Lesser world* pla-  
ced in a *Greater world*. In this  
*greater world* therefore which  
conteyneth all things; many  
things are to be wondred at;  
but especially quantitie, mul-  
titude, varietie, efficacie, and  
beauty. All which (if by  
Gods assistance they be duly  
considered) are of great force  
to eleuate the minde, and  
to make it become in a  
manner wrapt with admira-  
tion of an infinite greatnesse,  
multitude

multitude, varietie, efficacie and beautie : and being returned to it selfe ; whatsoeuer it beholdeth without God, to dispise as vaine and of no moment.

Eccles. c. i.

Truely the earth is so great, that *Ecclesiasticus* saith : *The breadth of the earth, and profunditie of the depth, who hath measured?* which may be vnderstood ; For that in so many thousand yeares as haue passed since the creation, as yet the whole surface of the earth (for that *Ecclesiasticus* calleth the breadth of the earth) is not knowne vnto our men, who daily haue sought after it. And what I pray you is the greatnesse of the earth compared to the compasse



compasse of the highest heauen? It is said by Astronomers to be as a *Poynt*, and not without cause. For we see the sunne beames, so to illuminate the opposite starres of the Firmament, although the earth be betweene, as if the same were nothing at all. And if euery starre in the Firmament be greater then the whole earth, (as the common opinion of wise men is) and yet seeme to vs because of their almost infinite distance to be very small; who then can conceiue the greatnesse of heauen in which so many millions of starres doe shine? If therefore *Ecclesiasticus* said: *The breadth of the earth, and profunditie of the depth*  
who

[Isay 40

who hath measured? What would he haue said of the Compasse of the highest heauen, and distance thereof vnto the lowest hell? truely it is so great, that it cannot be conceiued. Goe too now my soule, I aske thee, if the world be so great, how great is he that made the world? Great is our Lord, and there is no end of his greatnesse. Heare *Isay*: *Who hath measured the waters with his fist and pondered the heauens with a spanne? Who hath possed with three fingers the huge greatnes of the earth?* Where *St. Ierome* saith, that according to the translation of *Aquila*, by a fist is vnderstood the little finger; so that the sence is; The

The whole element of water, which is lesse then the earth, is measured with one little finger of God; the earth with three fingers, the heauen (which is greater then the earth and water together) is pondered with a spanne. But this is spoken metaphorically, for *God is a Spirit*, and hath no handes nor fingers properly: and the scripture by these comparisons, doth sufficiently shewe, that God is much greater then his Creatures; which *Salomon* signified more expressely when he said: *The heauen and heauens of heauens doe not containe thee.* For if an other world, or more worldes, yea infinite worldes were made,  
God

a Para. 6

God would fill them all. But thinke not my soule, thy God doth so fill the world, that a part of God is in a part of the world, and all God in all the world; for God hath no partes, but is all in all the world, and all in euery part of the world. Therefore if thou be faithfull to him; although Armies rise vp against thee, thy heart shall not feare: for what should he feare who hath an almightie Father and freind? but if for thy sinnes thou hast God an angry judge and an almightie enemy; then hast thou iust cause to dread with horrible feare, and to giue thine eyes and feete no rest, vntill God being pleased with thy true repentance,

repentance, thou take breath  
in the light of his mercies.

But now who can number  
the multitude of things crea-  
ted by one God maker of  
heaven and earth? *Who* (saith  
*Ecclesiasticus*) *can number*  
*the Sandes of the sea and drops*  
*of rayne?* But how many met-  
talls of gold and siluer, brasse,  
lead, pretious stones, Iemmes  
& margarites are there with-  
in the earth and Sea? how ma-  
ny kindes, sortes, and Indiui-  
dualls of hearebs, fruites, and  
plantes are there vpon the  
earth? also how many kindes,  
sortes, and Indiuidualls of  
perfect and vnperfect liuing  
creatures, foure footed beasts,  
creeping Creatures & foules?  
how many kindes, sortes, and  
Indiuiduals

Cap. 1

Eccles.  
cap. 1

Psal. 111

Gen. 15

Gen. 21

Dan 7

Indiuidualls of fishes in the Sea? Who can number them? what of the multitude of mankinde, of whom it is written: *According to thy highnesse, thou hast multiplied the children of men.* How many starres also are there in heauen and Angels aboue heauen? For of the starres we read in most true scripture: *Number the starres if thou canst;* And in another place they are compared to the sandes of the Sea, which are innumerable. Of the Angels *Daniel* writeth: *Thousands of thousandes ministred to him, and ten thousand hundred thousandes assisted him.* And *St. Thom.* 1. p. 9; *Su. art.* 3. affirmeth with *St. Denis*:  
*That*

*That the multitude of Angels, exceedeth in number all materiall things. Therefore this almost infinite multitude of things made by one God, doth demonstrate that in the diuine essence there are infinite perfections. For God would be knowne to man in some sort by his creatures; and because no creature can truely represent the infinite perfection of the Creator; he hath multiplied the Creatures, and hath giuen to euery one some goodnes & perfection, that therby may be gathered the goodnes and perfectiō of the Creator, who in one most simple essence includeth infinite perfections; euen after a sort as one peece*

Wisd. 14

of gold conteyneth the value of many peeces of brasſe. Therefore my ſoule, whatſoever thou doſt ſee or conceaue, which ſeemeth to thee admirable; let it be a *Ladder* to aſcend to the knowledge of thy Creator, who without doubt is much more admirable. So ſhall it come to paſſe, that Creatures, *which are made for a ſnare to the feete of the unwiſe* as *Wiſdome* teacheth, ſhall inſtruct, not deceaue, and direct not miſguide thee from the way of vertue. And if thou poſſeſſe gold, ſiluer and precious ſtones; ſay in thy hart, my God is more pretious, who hath promiſed me himſelfe, if I contemne theſe things. If thou admire  
earthly



earthly Empires and king-  
domes : say in thy hart; more  
excellent is the kingdome of  
heauen which remaineth for  
euer, which God (who lyeth  
not) hath promised to those  
that loue him. If pleasures  
and delights begin to tickle  
thy carnall senses : say in thy  
hart; the pleasure of the spi-  
rit is more delightfull, then of  
the flesh, and the delights of  
the minde, surpasse those of  
the belly, for the mortal crea-  
ture offordeth them, and the  
immortall Creator the other;  
which whosoever tasteth,  
may say with the Apostle: *I  
am replenished with consolation:*  
*I doe exceedingly abound in ioy  
in all our tribulation.*

2 Cor 7

Lastly, if any beautifull,

D 2

great

great or wonderfull thing be offered thee beside thy Lord God: answere assuredly, what goodnesse soeuer is therein; the same without doubt is much more and better in thy Lord: and therefore it is not profitable for thee to change gold for brasie, pretious stones for glasse, great things for small, certaine for doubtfull, & temporall for eternall.

But although the multitude of Creatures is admirable, and declareth the manifold perfections of *one* God: yet more admirable is the varietie of things which is seen in that multiplication. For it is not hard, with one Seale to expresse many figures alike, or with the same mould

to print innumerable letters :  
but to distinguish the formes  
almost infinite waies, as God  
did in the creation, is plaine-  
ly a diuine worke most wor-  
thy of admiration. To om-  
mitte those things which  
are most different and vn-  
like. In the Indiuidualls of  
hearbes , plantes , flowers  
and fruites, what great va-  
riety there is ? Their fi-  
gures , colours , odours ,  
tastes, how wonderfully di-  
stinguished ? And is not the  
like also in liuing crea-  
tures that haue sence ? but  
what shall I say of men,  
since in a great Armie, there  
can hardly be found two men  
alike ? which also is verifi-  
ed in the starres and Angels :

1. Cor. 5  
 1 par q. 50  
 art. 4

For one starre differeth from another in brightnesse as the Apostle witnesseth in the first to the Corinthians, And St. Thomas saith that the Angels although they exceed corporall things in number; yet they all differ among themselves, not onely in *Individuall number*, but also in *specificall forme*.

Lift vp then my soule thine eyes to God, in whom are the causes of all things; and from whom as from a fountaine of *infinite plentie*, this almost infinite *Varietie* did flowe.

For God could not have imprinted those innumerable formes in creatures, without comprehending the causes of them in the bosome of his essence after a most high and eminent

eminent manner. Not without cause therefore doth the Apostle crie out. *O Depth of the riches of the Wisdome and of the knowledge of God!* For truly it is a Well of infinite depth, wherein the treasures of that Wisdome and knowledge do lie hid, which could produce such varietie of things. Rightly also did St. Francis say vnto God : *Dens mens & omnia. O my God and all things.* Because what goodnes soeuer is diuided and distributed among creatures, is vnited in God after a more high and eminent manner. But thou my soule wilt say; Though these things seeme to be true: yet Creatures we see, we touch, we taste, and

Rom. 11

really enioy : but God wee cannot see, touch, taste, enioy, nor scarce conceaue, but as a thing very farre from vs : therefore it is no meruaile though we loue Creatures more then God. But if thou be strong in faith my soule, and dost continue in hope and charitie, thou canst not denie but that after this life which vanisheth like a shadow, thou shalt see God as he is in himselfe, and enioy him much more inwardly, then now thou dost his Creatures. Heare our Redeemer:

Math 5

*Blessed are the cleane of hart, because they shall see God.*

1 Cor. 13

*Heare St. Paul : We see now by a glasse in a darke sort : but then face to face.*

Heare

Heare St. Iohn : *We shall be like vnto him, because we shall see him as he is.* Moreouer how much of the world belongeth vnto thee? Truly neither the whole nor the halfe, nor a third or fourth part, nor scarce a small portion thereof falleth to thy share; the which in short time thou must be constrained to forsake : But God (in whom all things are) thou shalt enioy for all eternitie, (*For God shall be all in all the Saints and blessed without end*) He shall be thy life, meate, cloathing, house, honour, wealth, pleasure and thy *All*. Moreouer thy sweet and mercifull God, doth not comānd thee while thou art a Pilgrim on earth,

1 Epist. 3

1 Cor. 15

to want altogether the solace of his Creatures; For he made them all to serue thee: But he commaundeth thee to vse them soberly and temperately: and giue ioyfully of thy store vnto the needy, hauiing dominion ouer thy wealth in vsing it to the glory of God. Weigh therefore most diligently, if it be not more expedient for thee, to want the creatures in this life euen as they are necessarie, and in the other, to enioy thy Creator eternally in whom (as I haue said) all things are: or earnestly to labour in this life to purchase temporall goods, and neuer to be satisfied with their plenty, and in the other also to be deprived both



both of temporall and eternall. Adde moreouer that God is neuer farre from those that loue him; For euē in this life, he giueth them greater delights then the louers of the world finde in Creatures. It is not falsely written: *I haue bin mindefull of God, and am delighted.* And, *Be thou delighted in our Lord, and he will giue thee the petitions of thy hart;* And, *I truely will be delighted in our Lord.* And, *Reioyce the soule of thy seruant, because to thee O Lord, haue I lifted vp my soule.* And to omit the rest, when the Apostle said: *I am replenished with consolation, I doe exceedingly abound in ioy in all our tribulation,* truely he meant not that

Consola-

Psal. 76

Psal. 36

Psal. 101

Psal. 85

1 Cor. 9

Consolation came from tribulation, or ioy from sorrow; For thornes doe not bring forth Grapes, nor brambles Figges: but that to mittigate tribulations, God euer lendeth to his friends such pure, cleare, and solide comfortes, that temporall ioyes may not in any sort be compared to them. Therefore my soule let this be with thee a sure conclusion: *Who findeth God findeth all: Who loseth God loseth all.*

Cap. 4

It followeth now, that from the vertue which God hath giuen to creatures, we ascend to vnderstanding the infinite vertue of the Creator. There is not any thing but hath in it admirable vertue, powre  
and

and efficacie. A stone or  
lumpe of earth if it fall high,  
with what force doth it de-  
scend? what can resist it?  
What will it not breake?  
When the holy ghost in the  
Apocalips described the ex-  
cessiue violence wherewith  
the great *Babilon* (that is the  
whole company of the wic-  
ked) shall be cast headlong  
at the day of iudgement into  
hell, thus he saith: *And one  
strong Angel tooke vp as it  
were a great Milstone, and  
threw it into the Sea saying:  
With this violence shall Ba-  
bilon that great Citie bee  
throwne, and shall be found  
no more. The water like-  
wise which is so smooth  
and soft, and runneth gently  
vpon*

Apoc. 18

vpon the earth; when it is angry and swelleth in riuers or brookes, beareth downe and destroyeth all things it meeteth with, and not onely cottages of husbandmen, but also gates and walles of citties, and bridges of Marble haue we seene broken downe with it. Moreover the windes which blowe so sweetly, beat sometimes great ships against the rockes, and ouerturne aged Oakes. I my selfe haue seene (which had I not seene I should not haue beleeued) a very great heape of earth digged vp by a vehement winde, and carryed vpon a country village, so that a deepe ditch was to be seene from whence the earth was taken; and the whole

whole village to which the earth was carried, was couered and in a manner buried therewith. What shall wee say of fire? how quickly doth a small fire become a great flame, consuming woods and houses as it were in a moment?

*Beholde (saith St. James) how much fire what a great wood it kindleth.* What operation is there in hearbes? what vertue in stones, and especially in the Loadstone and Ambar? Furthermore among beastes, some we see are very strong, as Lyons, Beares, Bulls, Elephants; others very wittie although very small: as Antes, Spiders, Bees, &c. And to omit the power of Angels,

Iam. 3

Angels, the vertue of the Sun and starres which are far from vs; how excellent is the wit of man whereby so many arts haue bin inuented, as that we often doubt whether Nature hath bene by them equalized or surpassed.

Lift vp now my soule thine eyes to God, and thinke what vertue and power is in him, of whom in most true scripture it is said: *Who is like to thee among the strong O Lord? And, who onely doth great meruailes? And, The blessed & onely mightie, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.* For what vertue soeuer Creatures haue, they receiued from God, & shall enioy it so long as it pleaseth him. For who but God caused  
that

Exod. 15

Psal. 135

Tim. 6

that neither the waters of the Sea, nor teeth of the Whale did hurt *Ionas* in the Whales belly? Who but God shut the mouthes of the hungry Lyons that they could not touch *Daniel*? Who but God preserued the three children from hurt in the burning Furnace? Who but Christ true God said to the furious windes and raging Sea: *Peace, be still, and the winds ceased: and there was made a great calme.* That God (who receiueth not vertue and powre from any other, but whose will is a power against which none can resist) hath infinite power alwayes, and euery where: in comparison whereof all the power of

Ionas 2

Dan. 5

Mark. 4

Isay 40

of men is nothing. For so speaketh *Isay*: *All Nations as if they were not, so are they before him, and they are reputed of him as nothing, and a vaine thing.*

Rom. 8

Are they not fooles therefore which feare the Creatures, and not the *Almightie Creator*? And trust in the strength of themselves, and their friends, and not in God? *If God be for vs who is against vs? And if God be against vs who shall be for vs?*

1 Pet. 5

Wherefore my soule if thou be wise: *Be humbled vnder the mighty hand of God.* Loue him truly, and thou shalt not neede to feare what man or deuill, or any creature can do vnto thee. And if perhaps thou



thou hast fallen, and prouoked thy God to anger, giue thy head no rest vntill thou be at peace with him, *For it is horrible to fall into the handes of the lining God.*

Heb. 10

It remaineth that we consider the beauty of Creatures, whereof the Prophet said: *Thou hast delighted me O Lord in thy workmanship.* And truly as all things that God made are good, so are they all beautifull, if they be rightly considered. But (omitting the rest) let vs speake of those things which in the iudgement and opinion of all men are beautifull. Great surely is the beauty of a greene Meadow, of a well kept Garden, of a pleasant Wood, of  
a calme

Cap. 5

Psal. 91

a calme Sea, of a cleere ayre,  
of Fountaines, Rivers, Citties,  
and of the bright skye garni-  
shed with innumerable stars,  
like Iemmes. How much also  
doth the beautie of a tree  
delight vs that is adorned  
with blossomes, or loaded  
with fruit? The shapes like-  
wise of diuers kinds of foure-  
footed beastes, the flight of  
birdes, and the sporting of  
fishes? What shall I say of  
the beauty of the Moone and  
starres, but especially of that  
great and bright Planet the  
Sunne which comforteth all  
the world at his ryling? But  
men to whome we chiefly  
speak, are delighted with no-  
thing more then with their  
owne beauty & comelinesse.

*By*

By the beauty of women many  
haue perished saith Ecclesiasti-  
cus. We haue often scene, and  
griued, that men otherwise  
very wise, haue bin so in loue  
with the beauty of women;  
And likewise great and ho-  
norable women brought to  
such folly by the beauty of  
men; as they haue preferred  
their loue before their estate  
and dignitie, children and  
parentes, yea their life and  
eternall saluation. The ex-  
amples which are read in ho-  
ly Scripture of *Dauid*, *Salomon*,  
and *Sampson* are known,  
& histories are full of the like.

Wherefore my soule, if so  
great beautie be giuen by  
God to creatures, how great  
& admirable maist thou think  
is

Wisd. 13

is the beautie of God himselfe? For none can giue that which he hath not. And if men delighted with the beaury of the Sun and starres, though those *Bright bodies* (saith the wise man) *so be Goddesses; Let them knowe, how much the Lord of them is more beautifull then they; for the author of beautie made all these things.* How great the beautie of God is, we may gather, not onely because it comprehendeth the beautie of all creatures most eminently within it selfe: but also for that it being vnto vs inuisible while we are Pilgrims on earth, and onely vnderstood by faith of Scriptures and mirrour of Creatures; yet notwithstanding

notwithstanding, many saints haue bin so inflamed with the loue thereof, that some of them haue hid themselves in Desertes, and attended onely to the contemplation therof, as *St. Mary Magdalen*, *Paul* the first Heremite, the great *Anthony* and others of whom you may reade in the religious History of *Theodoret*. Others, (forsaking their wiues and Children, and whatsoever els they possessed on earth) liued in Monasteries vnder the obedience of others, that they might enioy the friendship of God. Others desired willingly with rigorous paines to end their liues, that they might come to the sight of that infinite beautie.

Heare

Psal. 3

Heare one of them, to wit,  
St. Ignatius the Martyre in his  
Epistle to the Romans : *Let  
fire, gallows, beastes, breaking  
of my bones, quartering of my  
members, brusing of my body,  
and all the torments of the De-  
uill come vpon me, so that I  
may enioy Christ.* If then this  
diuine beauty not yet seene  
but onely beleueed and ho-  
ped for, could kindle such a  
feruent desire, what will it  
doe when as the vaile being  
remooued, it shall be seene as  
it is in it selfe? It will doubt-  
lesse bring to passe, *That be-  
ing drunke with the torrent of  
that pleasure,* we neither will  
nor can one moment turne  
our eyes from it. And what  
wonder is it, although the  
Angels

Angels and blessed soules  
which alwayes see the face of  
their Father in heauen, are  
not wearied or tyred with  
that sight, since God himselfe  
from all eternity beholding  
his owne beauty, is fully plea-  
sed therewith, and being hap-  
pie by that sight, desireth no-  
thing els; entring as it were  
into a Vineyard or Garden  
of all delights, from whence  
he neuer shall nor will depart.

Seeke that beauty O my  
soule, sigh after it day and  
night: say with the Prophet,  
*My soule hath thirsted after*  
*thee the strong living, when shall*  
*I come and appeare before the*  
*face of God?* Say with the  
Apostle: *We are bolde, and*  
*haue a good will to be Pilgrims*

*Psal. 42*

*2Cor. 5*

*E rather*

rather from the body, and  
to be present with our Lord.  
Neither doe thou feare to be  
defiled with the loue of that  
beauty; For the loue thereof  
doth comfort not corrupt,  
doth purifie and not polute  
the hart. The holy virgin  
and martyre St. *Agnes* sayd  
truely, I loue Christ whose  
mother is a virgin, whose Fa-  
ther knoweth no woman;  
whom when I loue I am  
chaste, when I touch I am  
cleane, when I take I remaine  
a virgin. But if thou dost  
truely desire the vncreated  
beauty of thy Lord; thou  
must fulfill that which the A-  
postle addeth in that place:  
*Therefore (saith he) we endea-*  
*nour whether absent or present*

2 Cor. 5



to please him. If God please thee, thou oughtest likewise to please God. And surely we shall please God in the country of the liuing, when as we shall be illuminated with his glory, as the Prophet saith: *I will please our Lord in the country of the liuing.* But in this Pilgrimage we are so easily poluted, and defiled with the slime of sinne; that the Apostle St. James said: *In many things we offend all,* And the Prophet David to shewe how fewe are immaculate in this life, affirmeth that it belongeth to Happinesse, saying: *Blessed are the immaculate in the way.* Therefore my soule it in this absetee and Pilgrimage thou wilt

Psal. 114

Iam. 3

Psal. 118

please thy Lord, it is not enough to desire to please him, but it behooueth thee (as the Apostle saith) to strieve to please him; that is, with great diligence to beware of such spottes as may make thy face deformed; and if any happen to sticke therein, with like diligence to endeaour to wipe them away. Dost thou not see how women which seeke to please their husbands, spend many houres in dressing their hayre, adorning their face, and wiping away the spottes of their garments? and all this they doe to please the eyes of a mortall man, who soone after must be turned to earth and ashes: what oughtest thou therefore

to doe to please the eyes of  
thy immortall spouse, who  
alwaies beholdeth thee, and  
desireth to see thee without  
spot or wrinkle? It is neede-  
full then to strive with all thy  
force, *That thou walke before* Luc. i  
*him in belinesse and iustice*, and  
remoue from thee with speed  
all things that may hinder the  
same, not hauing respect to  
flesh and blood, nor to the  
speeches and opinions of  
men: For thou canst not  
please God and the world  
both at once according to the  
Apostles saying: *If I yet*  
*did please men, I should*  
*not be the servant of*  
*Christ.*

Gal. i

## THE THIRD STEPP,

*From the Consideration of the  
earth.*

Cap. 1

**W**E haue confide-  
red the Corporall  
world in generall:  
Let vs now confi-  
der the principall parts there-  
of, that from them we may  
erect a *Ladder* to contemplate  
the maker.

First there is the *Earth*, the  
which although it occupie  
the lowest place among the  
elements, and seemeth to be  
lesse then the rest : yet it is  
not lesse then the water ; and  
in dignitie and worth it ex-  
celleth the other elements.

Whereupon

Whereupon we often read  
in holy Scripture : That God  
made heauen and earth as the  
principall parts of the world ;  
For he made heauen as the  
Pallace of God and Angels :  
the earth, as the Pallace of  
men : *The heauen of heauen is  
to our Lord* (saith the Pro-  
phet) *but the earth he hath gi-  
uen to the children of men.* And  
that is the cause why the hea-  
uen is full of bright starres,  
& the earth aboundeth with  
mettalls , precious stones,  
hearbes, trees and beastes of  
diuers kindes , whereas the  
water is stored onely with  
fish, and the ayre and fire, are  
in a manner emptie and na-  
ked elements. - But omitting  
this ; The earth hath three

Gen. 1

Psal. 113

things most worthy of consideration, by which a vigilant minde may easily ascend vnto God.

First the earth is the most firme foundation of the whole world, without which we could neither waike, worke, rest nor liue. *He hath established* (saith David) *the round world which shall not be mooued,* And, *Thou hast founded the earth upon the stabilitie thereof, it shall not be inclined for euer and euer.*

Psal. 92

Psal. 103

Gen. I

Secondly, the earth (like a good Nurse to men and other living creatures) doth daily bring forth herbs, fruits, grasse & innumerable things of like kinde. For so God speaketh: *Behold I haue giuen*  
you

you all māner of bearb that seedeth vpon the earth, & all trees that haue in themselves seede of their own kinde to be your meat: and to all beastes of the earth.

Thirdly the earth bringeth forth stones & wood to build houses, and mettalls of brasse and yron for diuers vses, and gold and siluer wherof money is made, which is the instrument whereby all thinges necessary for the life of man are easily procured.

And truly that first propertie of the earth, to wit, to be the place in which our bodies rest; and not in the water, ayre, or fire; is an embleme of our Creator, in whom onely mans soule findeth a place of rest.

Thou

Lib. I  
Confel.  
c. I

*Thou hast made vs O Lord  
(saith St. Augustine) for thy  
selfe, and our hart is vnquiet  
untill it rest in thee.*

3 Reg. 4

*Salomon as much as euer  
any king sought after rest in  
honour, wealth and pleasure.  
He possessed a most ample &  
peaceable kingdome, so that  
the Scripture witnesseth: He  
had in his dominion all the king-  
domes with him, from the riner  
of the land of the Philistines  
unto the border of Ægypt: of  
them that offered him presentes,  
and serued him all the dayes of  
his life. His wealth also was  
incomparable; so that he  
kept forty thousand horses  
for Chariots, & twelue thou-  
sand to ryde vpon. And as  
we read in the same booke,  
the*



the Nauy of Salomon brought gold and precious stones from *Ophir* in such plenty that siluer was nothing worth; and as great was the plenty thereof in Ierusalem, as stones in the streetes. So many also were the pleasures which he had prouided for himselfe, that they may seeme vncredible. For falling into the inordinate loue of women, he tooke seauen hundred wiues as Queenes, and Concubines, three hundred as weread in the same book. But let vs heare himselfe speak of himselfe. *I haue magnified my workes* (saith he) *I haue built me houses, and planted vineyardes, I haue made gardens and Orchardes, and set them*  
with

3 Reg. 9  
& 10.

3 Reg. 11

Eccle 2

with trees of all kindes : and I  
haue made me ponds of waters  
to water the wood of springing  
rees : I haue possessed men ser-  
uants & women seruants & haue  
had a great family : herds also  
and great flockes of sheep aboue  
all that were before me in Ieru-  
salem : I haue heaped together  
to my seife siluer, & gold, and the  
substance of kings & Princes:  
I haue made me singing men &  
singing women, and the delights  
of the children of men : Cuppes  
and Goblets to serue to poure  
out Wines : and I surpassed  
in riches all that were before  
me in Ierusalem. Wisdome also  
bath perseuered with me; and all  
things that mine eyes desired, I  
haue not denied to them: neither  
hath I stayed my hart, but that

it enioyed all pleasure, and delighted it selfe in these things which I had prepared : And this I esteemed my portion, if I did vse my labour. Thus he, who doubtlesse had as great contentment, as could be had in Creatures, For he neither wanted kingdomes, nor wealth, nor pleasures, nor humane wisdom so much esteemed; And lastly he enioyed peace a long time to possesse so great happiuesse.

Let vs see now if all these things could content & satisfie the desires of his minde : When I had (saith he) turned my selfe to all the workes which my hands had don, & to the labours wherein I had sweat in vaine; I sawe all thinges vanitie and affliction

Eccle. 2

*affliction of minde, and nothing to be permanent vnder the Sun. Salomon therefore found not contentment in all his riches, delights, wisdom and honours; neither could he, although he had enjoyed much more: For the soule of man is immortall, and these things are mortall, and cannot long remaine vnder the Sunne; neither can it be that a soule which is capable of infinite good, should be satisfied with finite goods. Therefore as the body of man cannot rest in the ayre although it be most spacious, nor in the water although it be very deepe, because the earth is the place thereof, and not the ayre or water: so the minde*  
of

of man is neuer satisfied with  
ayrie dignities, nor watry  
wealth, to wit, with soft and  
deceauing pleasures, nor with  
the false glory of humane  
knowledge, but with God  
onely, who is the center of  
soules, and their onely true  
resting place.

O how truely and wisely  
did the father of *Salomon* say:  
*What is to me in heauen, and be-*  
*sides thee what would I vpon*  
*earth? God of my hart, and*  
*God my portion for euer.* As  
if he should haue said: I finde  
nothing in heauen or earth,  
or in any creature therein,  
that can giue me true con-  
tentment; thou onely art the  
God of my hart, that is, thou  
onely art a firme rocke to my  
hart;

*Psal. 73*

hart; for the word (*God*) in the Hebrew text signifieth a rocke in that place. Thou therefore art onely a most firme rocke to my hart, in thee onely will I rest, thou onely art my portion, my inheritance, and all my good; other things are nothing, nor of any force to suffice me one day, but thou alone wilt suffice me for euer.

Dost thou not knowe as yet my soule, that God onely is the rocke whereupon thou must rest; and that in al things els is vanitie and affliction of spirit? For they are not, but appeare to be, they comfort not, but afflict, because they are gotten with labour, kept with care & lost with sorrow.

Despise

Despise therefore If thou be  
wise all transitory thinges,  
least they carry thee away  
with them, and abide in that  
vnitie and bond of Charitie  
which continueth for euer.  
Lift vp thy hart to God in  
heauen, least it putrishe on  
earth: and learne true wis-  
dome from the folly of many,  
in whose names the wise man  
speaketh saying: *We therefore  
haue erred from the way of  
truth, and the light of iustice  
hath not shined to vs, and the  
Sunne of understanding rose not  
to vs. We are wearied in the way  
of iniquitie and perdition, and  
haue walked hard waies, but  
the way of our Lord we haue not  
known. What hath pride profited  
vs? Or what cōmodity hath the  
vaunting*

Wis. 5

*vannting of riches brought vs?  
All those things are passed away  
as a shadow: but in our  
naughtines we are consumed.*

Cap. 2

Math. 7

Moreover, a Rocke is also  
in an other respect, an em-  
bleme of our Lord God, as  
the wisdome of God did ex-  
pound vnto vs in his Gospell  
when he said; *That a house  
built vpon a Rocke should re-  
mains vnmoueable although the  
rayne fell, and the floods came  
and the windes blew: But a  
house built vpon the sand, can-  
not stand against any of these  
things, but at the first storme of  
rayne, winde or floods, it is cast  
downe, and the fall thereof is  
great.*

Thy house (my soule) hath  
diuers powers and faculties,



as it were Chambers or parlors; and if it be built vpon God as vpon a Rock; that is, if thou dost firmly belecue in God, if all thy trust be in God, and thou be grounded in the loue of God, that thou mayst say with the Apostle: *Who shall separte vs from the charitie of Christ?* Then be assured that neither the spirituall wickednesse which is aboue thee, nor carnall concupiscence which is vnder thee, nor thy domesticall enemies which are on the side of thee, to wit thy kinsfolkes and acquaintance, shall euer by their temptations preuaile against thee. Great surely is the force and subtiltie of the spirituall powers; but greater

ephes. 3  
Rom. 8

is

is the power and wisdom of the holy Ghost, who ruleth in that house which is founded on God. The flesh also fighteth eagerly against the spirit, and sometime overcommeth the strongest: but the love of God doth overcome the love of the flesh, and the feare of God doth vanquish the feare of the world. Those also of a mans household are his enemies, and with their peruerse counsell drawe his soule into the company of sinners: But that soule which trusteth she hath a Lord, a Father, a brother, and spowes in heauen; will easily contemne, and in that respect hate her carnall friendes and kinsfolkes, and say with the Apostle:

Apostle : *I am sure that neither death nor life, nor other Creature; shall be able to separate vs from the love of God which is in Christ Iesus our Lord.*

Luke 14  
Rom. 8

But that soule is indeede miserable, whose house being built vpon the sand, cannot continue long : And the fall therof will be great; because it belecueth lyes and trusteth to a staffe of Reede : Whose God is the belly, or money, or the smoake of honour; all which things passe away and perish very speedily, & drawe the soule which followeth them into eternal destruction.

It is also an other property of the earth like a good nurse plentifully

Cap. 3

Psal. 103

Math. 6

plentifully to bring forth hearbes and fruites for the sustenance of men and beasts. This propertie directeth vs to our maker as to our true Nurfing Father. For not the earth, but God in the earth, bringeth forth all good things. So speaketh the holy ghost by the mouth of *David*; *Who bringeth forth grasse for beastes and hearbe for the seruice of men.* And againe, *All expect of thee that thou giue them meate in season.* Thou giuing to them, they shall gather it, thou opening thy hand, all thinges shall be filled with bountie. And our Lord in the Gospel: *Behold the fowles of the ayre that they sowe not, neither reape, nor gather into barnes,*

barnes, and your heauenly Father feedeth them. And the Apostle, And truly not without testimony hath God left himselfe, bestowing benefites from heauen, giuing raine and fruitfull seasons, filling with foode and ioy our harts. Neither is that false which is said in the beginning of Genesis: Let the earth shoote forth green hearbes and such as may seeede, and fruit trees yeilding fruits after his kinde. For although the earth shoote forth hearbs and fruit trees, yet it is by the vertue which God gaue vnto it, and God by it keepeth and increaseth them. Therefore David inuiting all creatures to prayse their maker, ioyneth with the rest: Fruitfull trees  
and

Act. 14

Gen. I

Psal. 140

Dan. 3

*and all Cedars.* And the three children in *Daniel* are exhorted with all other thinges, to blesse, prayse and magnifie him for euer.

1 Iohn 4

And if all creatures after their manner praise God, with what affection oughtest thou my soule to prayse him for all his benefites which thou dost dayly enioy? acknowledging in them his fatherly loue which neuer ceaseth to prouide all things for thee. But this is not much in the eyes of thy Lord God: For he produceth in thee as in his spirituall field, the noble branche of Charitie; *For Charitie is not of the world, but of God,* as the most beloved Disciple speaketh in his Epistle.

Epistle. From Charitie also as from a heauenly tree, spring the white and odoriferous flowers of holy cogitations, the greene leaues of profitable wordes for the saluation of Nations, and the ripe fruites of good workes, by which God is glorified, our neighbour edified, and merits increased and kept for eternall life. But woe to those who after the manner of foolish beastes, desire to be filled with the fruites of the earth, not thinking of their giuer, nor thanking him for them: their soules are like the earth w<sup>ch</sup> God did curse, that bringeth forth nothing but thorns & thistles. For what do they think in whose minds

F God

Gal. 6

God sloweth not chaste intentions, but of adulteries, homicide, sacriledge, theftes, trecheries and the like? And what doe they speak but blasphemies, periuries, reproches, heresies, detractions, contumelies, false testimonies and lyes, which they have learned of their father the deuil? finally what fruites do they bring forth but those whereof we have spoken, and which the Apost'e calleth *The workes of the fl. sh.* These indeed are the thornes which first pricke the minde, which bringeth them forth with bitter thoughts of feares and cares: And then they pricke the same, mindes, and bodies of others with vncurable woundes, whereby  
gre-



great hurt often times ensuerh.

But leauing this ; my soule if thou wilt be the Garden of God ; take heed that thornes and thistles be neuer found in thee : but with all diligence cherish the tree of Charitie, the Lilly of chastitie, and the Spiknard of humilitie. Take heede it neuer enter into thy minde to thinke that these braunches of heauely vertues come from thy selfe, and not from thy Lord God, who is  $\text{y}$  Lord of vertues ; Neither attribute to thy selte the keeping increase and ripenisse of the fruite of good workes, but as much as thou canst commend them vnto God.

There remaineth the last

Cap. 4

Agg. 2

commendation of the earth,  
for that in her bosome are  
conteyned gold, siluer, and  
precious stones: but truely  
the earth doth not by her  
owne vertue bring forth such  
precious kindes of thinges,  
but he who by *Aggeus* saith;  
*Mine is the siluer, and mine is  
the gold.* O louer of men,  
did it please thy goodnesse  
not onely to produce stones,  
wood, yron, brasse, lead, and  
such like thinges necessarie  
for the building of houses,  
shippes, and other instru-  
ments: but also gold, sil-  
uer, and precious stones  
for beauty and ornament?  
And if thou giuest these  
thinges to Pilgrims on earth,  
and often also to thy enemies  
which

which blaspheme thy name,  
what wilt thou giue to thy  
friendes who shall prayse  
thee and raigne with thee in  
heauen? Thou wilt giue  
them doubtlesse not some  
little peeces of golde and  
siluer, or some fewe preci-  
ous stones, but that Cittie  
whereof Iohn the Apostle  
speaketh in the Apocalips  
when he saith : *And the*  
*building of the Wall there-*  
*of was of Iasper stone : but*  
*the Cittie it selfe pure gold,*  
*like to pure glasse. And*  
*the foundations of the Wall*  
*of the Cittie, were adorned*  
*with all precious stone : And*  
*the twelue Gates there, are*  
*twelue Pearles.*

Apoc. 21

But we must not imagin that

F 3

heauenly

heauenly cittie of *Ierusalem* is built or adorned with gold, pearles, and precious stones as heere they are; For the holyghost vseth these wordes because he speaketh to vs who see no better or greater things; but without doubt that cittie ( which is the country of Gods elect ) doth more excell all the citties of this world, then a cittie of gold or precious stones doth surpasse all country villages made of strawe and clay.

Lift vp therefore my soule the eyes of thy minde to heauen, and thinke of what value the riches are there; since golde, siluer, and precious stones, which are heere so esteemed, in comparison thereof

ot, are but as strawe and clay.  
The gold, silver, and precious stones also which we haue, are corruptible, but those which shine in that heavenly Cittie, are incorruptible. But if thou wilt send thy corruptible gold and silver by the hands of the poore vnto that heavenly Cittie (which surely if thou be wise thou wilt doe) then will it become incorruptible, and bethine for euer.

For the Truth cannot lye who saith; *Set the things that thou hast, and giue to the poore, and thou shalt haue treasure in heauen.* And in another place: *Set the things that you possesse, and giue almes. Make to you Purses that were not,*  
*F 4                      treasure*

Mar. 19

Luke 12

treasure that wasteth not in hea-  
 ven: Whither the theefe appro-  
 cheth not, neither doth the  
 Mothe corrupt. O increduli-  
 tie of the sonnes of Men!  
 Man who is a lyer promiseth  
 ten for one hundred, and to  
 repay the principall to his  
 creditor, and he is beleeued:  
 God who cannot lye, promi-  
 seth to him that giueth an  
 almes, a treasure in heauen, a  
 hundred for one, yea eternall  
 life; & yet the couetous man  
 feareth and cannot easily be  
 perswaded to belecue, but  
 had rather hide his treasure  
 Where rust consumeth it, and  
 theeues breake in and steale it,  
 then lay it vp in heauen,  
 where there is neither rust to  
 consume it, nor theefe

Math. 19

to steale it.

But O vnhappy man although it chance that neither theeves doe steale, nor Mothe or rust corrupt that which thou hast gott with labour and kept with care; yet shall it not be thine as it might haue bin, if by the handes of the poore thou hadst sent it into the heauenly treasure; For experience teacheth, that the wealth which couetous rich men haue gathered, commeth vnto prodigall heyres, who in much shorter time waste it, then their couetous parents got it: whose sinne of couetousnes remayneth notwithstanding for euer; For their worme  
of conscience shall not dye,

Isay 66

Mar. 9

*and the fire of hell shall not be extinguished.*

Luke 12

Therefore my soule, let the folly of others teach thee Wisdome. Heare thy Lord and<sup>e</sup> master preaching: See *and beware of all auarice: For not in any mans abundance doth his life consist, of those thinges which he possesseth. The couetous man gathereth and kepeth to haue whereby he may maintaine his life a long time, but it happeneth otherwise; For he dyeth when as he least thinketh thereof; but his wealth couetously gotten, doth ingender a worme that will not die, and kindleth a fire that will not be quenched. O vnhappy couetous man! why hast thou so care-fully*



fully scraped together money  
to prepare fewell for hell fire?  
Heare *St. Iames* in his last Epi-  
stle: go too now ye rich men, weep  
howling in your miseries which  
shall come to you. Your riches  
are corrupt : and your gar-  
ments are eaten of Mothes,  
your gold and silver is rusted:  
and their rust shall be for a  
testimony to you, and shall eat  
your flesh as fire. You (saith  
*St. Iames*) because you are  
rich are called and accom-  
ped happy ; but indeed ye are  
more miserable then the  
poore. And yet haue great  
cause to lament, for the great  
miseries which assuredly shall  
fall vpon you. The super-  
fluous wealth you haue kept,  
and suffered to corrupt when  
ye

Iam. 5

yee ought to haue giuen it to the poore : The superfluous garments you haue possessed, and rather would haue the Mothes to eate them, then the poore to be clothed with them : And your gold and siluer which you would haue to rust rather then bestowe it to feed them; All these things I say, will beare witnesse against you at the day of iudgement, and the Mothes and rust of your wealth will become a burning fire, which shall waste your flesh for euer, and not consume it, that the fire may not be quenched, nor the paine ended. Let vs therefore conclude with the kingly Prophet : *They haue said (to wit fooles) that it is a happy*

happy people which hath these  
things, (that is to say great  
wealth) but indeed: Blessed  
is the people whose God  
is our Lord.



THE

## THE FOURTH STEPP,

*From the Consideration of Waters,  
and especially of  
Fountaines.*

Cap. I

**T**He Water hath the second place among the elements of the world, and from it also being rightly considered, a stepp of Ascension vnto God may be framed.

First therefore we will consider Waters ingenerall, and after we will drawe a speciall Ascension vnto God from Fountaines. The water is cold and moyst, and hath (as it were) five properties; For it washeth away spottes, it quencheth

quencheth fire, it cooleth heate, it ioyneth diuers things together, and lastly it ascendeth as high, as it descendeth lowe.

These things are manifest Emblemes and resemblances of God the Creator of all. Water doth wash corporall spotted: God doth wash spirituall spotted: *Thou shalt wash me (saith David) and I shall be made whiter then Snowe.* For although contrition, Sacraments, Priests, almes, and other workes of pietie doe wash the spotted, that is, the finnes of the soule: yet they are but instruments or dispositions; the Author of this washing is onely God. *I am* (saith God by Isay) *I am he that*

Pla'. 50

Isay 43

that take cleane away thine iniquities for mine owne sake. And therefore the Pharises who murmuring against Christ sayd; *Who can forgive sinnes but onely God?* Were not deceived in giuing onely to God supreme power to forgive sinnes; but because they beleeued not that Christ was God; and so they did both blaspheme and speake the truth at one time.

John 7

Neither doth God onely wash the spotts of the soule like water, but also would be called water; For so writeth *St. Iohn: He that beleueneth in me as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flowe riners of liuing water. And this he sayd of the spirit that they should*

should receiue: which beleeue in  
him: for as yet the spirit was  
not giuen: because Iesus was  
not yet glorified. Therefore  
God the holy Ghost is liuing  
water, and thereof speaketh  
Ezechiel: I will poure out v-  
pon you cleane water, and you  
shall be clesed from all Con-  
taminations. But because  
this increated water doth  
farre excell the created wa-  
ter: We will set downe  
three differences betweene  
the washing of the one and  
the other.

Ezech.36

The created water doth  
wash away corporall spotts,  
yet not all; for many it can-  
not wash away vnlesse it be  
holpen with soape or some  
other meanes.

The

The increated water doth wash away all spots; for so wereade in the place aboue cited: *And you shall be cleansed from all your Contaminations.*

The created water doth seldome so wash away spots but that some little signe of them remayneth. The increated water doth wash in such sort, that the thing washed becommeth more white and cleane then before it was contaminated: *Thou shalt wash me* (saith David) *and I shall be made whiter then Snowe.* And our Lord saith by Isay; *If your sinnes shall be as Scarlet they shall be made white as Snowe: and if they be red as vermillion, they shall be white*

Psal. 50

Isay 1.



as Wooll.

Also the created water doth wash naturall spotted, which resist not the washing: the increated water doth wash voluntary spotted, which cannot be cleansed vnlesse the soule consent thereunto. And so admirable is the vertue of this water, that it sweetly entreth into hardened hartes, and is not refused; because (as St. *Augustine* doth truely teach) *It selfe is the cause that it is not refused.* Who can conceaue O Lord how thou giuest faith vnto the vnfaithfull, humilitie vnto the proude, and charitie vnto thine enemies, that he who once breathed forth threats and slaughter, and persecuted thee

Lib. de  
p. 2d. ff.  
c. 8.

Psal. 57

thee in thy Deciples, being changed on the sodaine, most willingly suffered for thee and thy Church threatens, and persecutions? Farr be it from me to diue into thy secrets, for I had rather seele then search after the force of thy grace. And because I knowe that water of thine to be *A voluntary raine*, separated to *thine inheritance* as the Prophet sayd; Therefore I humbly beseech thee, let me be found in thy inheritance, and let the dewe of thy grace descend into the earth of my hart, that it remaine not like earth without water to thee, for so barren it is that of it selfe it can thinke no good. But to proceede.

Water

Water quencheth fire; and the heauenly Water, that is, the grace of the holy ghost doth strangely quenche the fire of carnall lust. Fasting and bodily afflictions auayle much also; if they be vsed as instruments of grace, otherwise of themselves they are of small force; For loue is the cheife among the affections and perturbations of the minde, which ruleth all and is obeyed by all. Loue will not be forced; and if it be stopped one way, it breaketh out an other way. Loue feareth nothing, dareth any thing, and vanquisheth all things.

Lastly, Loue yeeldeth onely vnto greater loue.

So

9 Conf.  
c. 1.

So flithly loue which followeth the wealth and pleasures of the world, yeldeth onely to the loue of God, and the water of the holy ghost distilling into the hart of man, quickly cooleth the heate of concupiscence. Witnesse St. *Augustine*, who being long accustomed to lust, thought it vnpossible to want the company of a woman; yet beginning to taste the grace of the holy ghost he cryed out in the ninth booke of his confessions: *Quam suauis &c.* O how sweet was it to me on the sodaine to want the pleasures of trifies, and what before I feared to loose. I now reioyced to forsake. For thou the true and chiefest Happinesse didst cast them

them from me : Thou didst  
cast them from me, and didst  
enter for them more sweet then  
any pleasure, but not so flsh  
and blood: more bright then a-  
ny light, more inward then any  
secret : more high then any ho-  
nour: but not to those that are  
high in themselves.

Water also quencheth Cap. 3  
thirst; and onely the water of  
the holy ghost can quench  
the manifold and almost end-  
lesse desires of mans hart.  
So the truth speaking to the  
Samaritan woman plainly  
taught : Every one (saith he)  
that drinketh of this water, shall  
thirst againe : but he that shall  
drinke of the water that I will  
give him, shall not thirst for e-  
uer. Indeepe so it is : The eye

Ioh 4

is not filled with seeing, neither is the eare fulfilled with hearing. For the minde of man is capable of infinite good, and all creatures are finite. But he that beginneth once to drinke of this diuine water wherein all things are, seeketh after no more. And of this we haue spoken before, were we treated that the rest of our soules is in God onely as in their proper center.

Cap. 4

Water ioyneth diuers things together : as many graynes of corne to make one loafe, and many peeces of earth to make one bricke. But more easily and more vnsepeperably doth the *Water of the holy Ghost* make

A. 4

many

many men to be of *one hart*  
and *one soule*, as we read in the  
Acts of the Apostles of the  
first Christians, vpon whom  
the *holy ghoſt* did next after  
the Apostles descend. And  
our Lord being to Ascend to  
his father; commendeth that  
vnitie which the water of the  
holy goſt cauſeth ſaying: *And*  
*not for them onely do I pray, but*  
*for them alſo that by their word*  
*ſhall beleue in me: that they*  
*all may be one as thou (Father)*  
*in me and I in thee, that they al-*  
*ſo in vs may be one.* And a  
little after: *That they may be*  
*one as we alſo are one. I in them,*  
*and thou in me: that they*  
*may bee conſummate in*  
*one.* To which vnitie  
the Apostle alſo exhorteth

Act. 4

Ioh. 17

Ephc. 4

1 Cor. 10  
1 Cor. 6

vs in his Epistle to the Ephesians saying : Be carefull to keep the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit: as you are called in one hope of your vocation. O happy vnion which maketh many men one body of Christ, gouerned by one head, participating of one bread, drinking of one Cup, and liuing by one spirit of God, is made one spirit with him. What can his seruants more desire then to participate not onely of all their masters goods, but also by the vnseparable bond of loue to be made one with the Almighty? All which is wrought by the grace of the holy Ghost, when as liuing water

it



it is deuoutly receiued, and diligently kept in the hart.

Lastly the water ascendeth as high, as it descendeth lowe.

Cap. 5

And as the holy ghost came from heauen to earth, so that hart in whom he is receaued,

*Is made a fountaine of water springing up into life euertlasting*

Ioh. 4

as our Lord said to the Samaritan woman, that is, man borne againe of water and the holy Ghost, who hath the same spirit dwelling within him, causeth his merits to ascend, from whence grace did descend.

Therefore my soule being taught and incited by these passages of Scripture, say often to thy heauenly Father with deepe sighes : Giue me

Luk. 11

this water which washeth cleane  
all spots, quencheth all fire of  
Lust, cooleth all heat of thirst,  
and maketh me one spirit with  
my God, that ( being in me a  
Fountaine of water springing up  
into life everlasting ) it may  
cause in me merits to ascend  
thether wheras I hope to liue  
for euer. Not without cause  
did the Son of God say: *If you  
then being naught knowe how to  
giue good giuists to your chil-  
dren, how much more will your  
Father in heauen; giue the good  
spirit to them that aske him?*  
And he saith not, that he will  
giue bread, cloathes, wisdome  
charity, or life everlasting: but  
the good spirit, for in it al things  
are conteyned. Cease not then  
O my soule daily to admonish  
the

the Father of the promise of his son, saying with great deuotion & assured hope to obtaine. *O holy father*, not in mine owne iustification doe I pray vnto thee; but in the promise of thy onely begotten Sonne. For he hath said vnto vs *How much more will your Father in beauen, giue the good Spirit to them that aske him*: Surely thy Sonne is the *Truth*, he deceaueth vs not; Fulfill therefore the promise of thy Son who hath glorified thee vpon earth, and was obedient to thee vnto death, *even the death of the Crosse*. Giue the good spirit to them that aske it of thee. Giue the spirit of thy loue and feare; that thy seruant may loue nothing but thee,  
and

*Ioh. 17*  
*Phil. 2*

Psal 50

& his neighbour in thee; nor feare but onely to offend thee. *Create a cleane hart in me O God: and renew a right spirit in my bowells. Cast me not away from thy face: and thy holy spirit take not from me. Render unto me the ioy of thy saluation, and confirme me with a principall spirit.*

Cap. 6

Now I come to the resemblance which Fountaines of water haue with God; for from them also may the minde be eleuated to consider his wonderfull workes. And not without cause is God called in holy scripture *A Fountaine of life, And, A Fountaine of liuing water.* And that he is the *Fountaine of Being*; We gather by these wordes

Psal. 35  
Eccle. 1

Hier. 2

wordes of God to *Moyſes*:  
*I am which am, he which is hath*  
*ſent me to you.* All which, the  
Apoſtle ſeemeth to haue in-  
cluded when he ſaith: *In him*  
*we liue, and moue, and be.* For  
in him we are, as in a Foun-  
taine of being; In him we  
liue, as in a Fountaine of life:  
And in him we moue, as in  
a Fountaine of Wiſdome,  
becauſe *Wiſdome is more moue-*  
*able then all moueable things:* &  
*reacheth euery where becauſe of*  
*her cleanneſſe* as it is ſaid in the  
booke of Wiſdome.

Exod. 3

A&amp;C. 17

Wiſd. 7

A fountaine of water with  
vs hath this propertie, that  
Riuers ſpring from it; and  
when they ceaſe to flowe  
from their fountaine, they are  
ſoone dried vp: but the  
fountaine

fountaine dependeth not of the riuers; for it receaueth not water from them but from it selfe, and giueth it vn-to others. This is a true resemblance of the diuinitie; For God is the most true fountaine of *Being*: because he receaued his *Being* from no other thing; but all thinges receiued their being from him. God receaued his *being* from no other thing, because his *essence* is to *be*, and his *being* is his *existence*; so that, it cannot be conceaued or caused but that God hath beene alwayes, and alwayes shall be. Other thinges may be for a time, and for a time not be: because existence doth not necessarily

cessarily belong vnto their  
essence. For example : It  
belongeth to the essence of  
a man to be a reasonable  
creature : and therefore he  
cannot be a man vnlesse he  
be a reasonable creature :  
and if existence belonged al-  
so to the essence of a man,  
he should then alwayes ex-  
ist : but because it belong-  
eth not to his essence ;  
therefore hee may exist  
and not exist. God then is the  
*Fountaine of Being* because  
his essence includeth actu-  
all existence for euer,  
as is signified by those  
wordes *I am : Which am.*  
That is, I am essence it selfe,  
and receaue not my *Be-  
ing* from any other thing ;  
for

Exod. 3

I Tim. 1  
I Tim. 6

Heb. I

for to me onely *my essence is my existence.* Therefore eternitie and immortalitie is proper vnto God onely as the apostle saith: *To the king of the worldes immortall, onely God, And, who onely hath immortalitie.* For all other things receaue in such sort their essence from God; that vnlesse they doe alwaies depend one him, and be preserved by him; they presently cease to be. Wherevpon the same Apostle saith: *Who carrieth all things by the word of his power.*

Therefore O my foule admire and reuerence the infinite goodnesse of thy maker, who maintaineth and preserveth all things so louingly, although



although he needeth not  
their seruice. Admire and  
Imitate also the patience of  
thy sayd maker who is so  
mercifull vpon *the unkinde*  
*and the euill*, that he feedeth  
and preserueth those which  
blaspheme him, and deserue  
to be brought to nothing.  
Let it not therefore seeme  
much vnto thee, to beare  
sometimes with the infirmi-  
ties of thy brethren, and (as  
thou art commanded) to doe  
good to those that hate thee.

Luke 6

But the being a Fountaine,  
doth not onely consist in not  
receauing being from an o-  
ther Fountaine, and in giuing  
being vnto other things; For  
the water both of Fountaines  
and Riuers with vs is of the  
same

same kinde; and albeit that fountaines receaue not their water from other fountaines; yet they haue a cause of their being, to wit, vapours, which also haue other causes successiue, vntill we come vnto God the first cause. But God thy maker (my soule) is not of the same kinde with creatures; but infinitely surpasseth them in dignitie, nobilitie, and excellencie. He also is truely and properly the *Fountaine of Being*, because he doth not onely not receaue his *being*, from an other *fountaine of being*, but also, for that he hath no cause at all. A Fountaine of created water (as is said) is not deriued from any other water

water; but from an other  
cause: but the increated  
Fountaine of *Being* hath not  
any thing before himselfe,  
dependeth not of any thing,  
wanteth not any thing, nor  
can he hurt by any thing;  
but all thinges depend of  
him, and he can *Destroy*  
*the whole world with a becke*  
as saith the valiant *Macha-*  
*bans.*

2 Mach. 8

Admire this eminencie  
(O my soule) this begin-  
ning, without beginning,  
this Cause without Cause,  
this essence that is infinite,  
vnlimited, immense and ab-  
solutely necessary, in compa-  
rison wherof, all other things  
are but casuall. And of  
this perhappes the *Truth* said:  
*But*

Luk. 10

*But one thing is necessary.* Adhere therefore to him onely, serue him onely, and delight in his loue onely. Despise all other thinges for his sake; or els be not troubled with too much care about many thinges, (since one thing is necessarie which onely is enough for thee and al others) but let thy care be neuer to fall from his grace, studying alwaies and euery where how to please him.

Cap 7

God also is most truely called a *Fountaine of life*, because he hath life in himselfe, and is life eternall it selfe:

1 Ioh. 5

*He is the true God, and life eternall* saith St. Iohn; and all thinges that liue, receaue life from that fountaine, which when

when it shall cease to giue  
them life , *They shall sayle,*  
*and shall retorne into their dust*  
as the holy Prophet *David*  
saith. It is proper vnto li-  
uing creatures to beget their  
like. God also begott a  
Sonne most like vnto him-  
selfe : *For as the Father hath*  
*life in himselfe: So he hath gi-*  
*uen to the Sonne also to haue life*  
*in himselfe,* as *St. Iohn* witnes-  
seth in the Gospell: But the  
Father hath life in himselfe  
because he is the fountaine  
of life : and the Sonne hath  
life in himselfe, because the  
Father hath giuen him the  
same life which he hath,  
wherby the Sonne also is the  
fountaine of life; yet the  
Fountaine of life of the  
Fountaine

*Psal. 103*

*Ioh. 5*

*Fountaine of life*, as God of God, and light of light. Who can declare or conceaue what the life of God is, and what this *Fountaine of life* is from whence all things that liue in heauen or earth drawe drops of life? The life which we in this banishment know, is no other but *The internall beginning of Motion*. For those things we say liue, which moue themselves after some manner. And therefore the water of Riuers is commonly called running or liuing water, because it seemeth to moue of it selfe; And the water of Ponds standing or dead water, For that it is not moued but by the Windes, or some other externall force.

Thy

Thy God O my soule most  
truely liueth, and is the *Author and Fountaine of life*. For  
often doth he in holy Scrip-  
ture inculcate this saying:  
*Liue I saith our Lord*, And the  
Prophets often repeate: *The  
Lord liueth, the Lord liueth*.  
And in *Hieremie* God com-  
plaineth of the people saying:  
*They haue forsaken me the  
Fountaine of liuing Water*; and  
yet he is not moued either by  
himselſe or by any other: *I  
am God* (saith he) *and am not  
changed*. And againe, *God is  
not as the sonne of Man that he  
may be changed*. We sing al-  
ſo very often in the ecclesiasti-  
call hymne: *O God which doſt  
preſerue the ſtrength of things,  
& (thy ſelſe being vnmoueable)*  
doſt

Num. 14

Hier. 2

Hier. 16  
Malac. 3  
Num. 23

*doſt ſucceſſively diuide the day  
and night &c.*

So that if God beget a ſonne, he begetteth him without mutation: and if he ſee, heare, ſpeake, loue, pardon or iudge; he doth all without mutation: And if he create and preſerue; or deſtroy and diſſipate, and againe renewe and change; yet he worketh reſting, and changeth without being changed. How then doth he liue if he moue not? And how doth he not liue if he be the Fountaine and author of life? This knot is eaſily vntyed. For to liue it is abſolutely enough, that the thing which liueth worke of it ſelfe, and be not moued by an other. But life  
for



for the most part in Creatures  
is the Internall beginning of  
motion, because Creatures  
are vnperfect, & haue need of  
many things to performe the  
actions of life : But God is  
*Infinite perfection*, and hath  
need of nothing without  
himselfe, and therefore he  
worketh of himselfe and is  
not moued by any other.  
Creatures neede mutation to  
ingender, and be ingendred,  
because they ingender with-  
out themselues, and the thing  
ingendred must be changed  
from *a not being to a being* :  
But God begot a sonne with-  
in himselfe. And within him-  
selfe produceth the holy  
ghost; neither ought the Son  
or the holy Ghost to be  
changed

changed from a *not being* to a *being*, because they receaue that *being* which was alwaies; and they receaue it not in time but from eternitie.

Creatures need the Motion of *Augmentation*, because they are borne vnperfect: but God the Sonne is borne most perfect, and God the Holy ghost is breathed and produced most perfect. Creatures need the motion of alteration to attaine diuers qualities which they want: but God wanteth nothing, for his essence is of *infinite perfection*. Creatures neede locall motion, because they are not euery where: but God is wholly euery where. Moreouer Creatures need many things to see,  
heare

heare, spake and worke; because their life is poore and vnperfect: but God needeth nothing without himselfe to see all, heare all, speake to all, and to worke all; For he (as is said) is life it selfe, and the *Fountaine of life*. And that we may put an example in the action of seeing. A man to see, needeth a seeing power, which is distinct from the soule which properly seeth; he needeth an object, that is a coloured body distant from him; he needeth the light of the Sunne, or of some other bright body; he needeth a *Medium*, that is a perspicuous body; he needeth a *sensible Species* or forme to be caried from the object to the eye; he needeth

needeth a *corporall organ* to wit  
an eye furnished with humors  
& fleshy tunicles, he needeth  
sensitiue spirits, and opticke  
synowes by which those spi-  
rits must passe; he needeth a  
proportionable distance; And  
lastly he needeth the Appli-  
cation of the seeing powre  
or facultie.

Behold how many thinges  
men and other liuing Crea-  
tures want, to performe one  
action of life: But God who  
truely hath all life in himselfe,  
needeth nothing. His infinite  
essence doth include power,  
forme, obiect, light and all o-  
ther things. God of himselfe,  
by himselfe, and in himselfe,  
seeth all thinges which are,  
haue bin, or shall be, and eue-  
dently

dently knoweth all things which may be. And before the world was made, God sawe all things, so that by the creation of things there came nothing but was before knowne vnto him. What then shalt thou be my soule, when thou shalt partake of that life? Is it much that God commandeth thee, when he would haue thee spend this corporall, animall, poore and vnperfect life for himselfe and thy brethren, to obtaine life eternall? And if he commaund not much when he commandeth this life to be contemned, how light and little ought it seeme to thee, when he commandeth thee to bestowe thy dead riches vpon

pon the poore, to abstayne from lust, to renounce the Deuill and his pompes, and with true deuotion of hart to sigh after that life which onely is true life.

Cap. 8

Eccle. I

But it is time now to Ascend as we may vnto the *Fountaine of Wisdome*. A *Fountaine of Wisdome* the word of God on high saith Ecclesiasticus: And he saith On high, because the *Fountaine of Wisdome* doth plentifully flowe vpon the holy Angels and blessed soules in heauen; but vnto vs that inhabite this *Desert and Pilgrimage* & *Wisdome* her selfe descendeth not, but a certaine vapour or shadow thereof.

Wherefore my soule seeke  
not

not after higher thinges  
then beſeemeth thee. Doe  
not ſearch the Maieſtie,  
leaſt thou be oppreſſed of  
the glory. Admire his Wiſ-  
dome of whom the Apoſtle  
ſpeaketh : To God the one-  
ly wiſe. Congratulate thoſe  
blessed ſpirits which drinke  
of the fountaine of Wiſdome;  
And although they doe not  
comprehend God, which  
onely is proper vnto  
God; yet they beholde  
the face of God without  
Veyle or interpoſition; and  
being irradiated with the  
brightneſſe thereof, they  
iudge truly of all things,  
not ſcaring in that Meri-  
dian light of Wiſdome,  
the darkeneſſe of errors,  
H blyndneſſe

Prou. 25

Rom. 16

Col. 2

Ioh. 14

blindenesse of ignorance, or  
clowde of opinions. Seeke  
after that happinesse, and that  
thou mayst assuredly attaine  
to it, loue our Lord Iesus  
Christ withall thy hart, *In  
whom be all the treasures of the  
Wisdome and knowledge of God;*  
For he hath said in his Gos-  
pell: *He that loueth me shall be  
loued of my Father, and I will  
loue him, and will manifest my  
selfe to him.* And what mea-  
neth (*I will manifest my selfe to  
him*) but that I will manifest  
to him the treasures of Wis-  
dome and knowledge which  
are in me? Truly euery man  
doth naturally desire know-  
ledge: and although carnall  
concupiscence doth now in  
many, lull as it were this de-  
fire



fire a sleepe : Yet when this corruptible body shall be laid aside, which now dulleth the soule ; then will the fire of this desire breake forth more then any other.

How great will thy Happinesse be then my soule, when as thy Louer and beloved Christ shall shew thee the *treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God?* But lest thou be frustrated of so great hope; endeauiour to keep the commandements of Christ; For he said : *If any loue me, he will keepe my word; and he that loueth me not, keepeth not my wordes.* And in the meane while, haue thou that Wisdom which holy Iob describeth saying : *The feare of God* Iob. 14  
Iob. 28  
H 2 that

that is wisdome, and to depart  
from euill, understanding. And  
what goodnes soeuer thou  
seest in Creatures, acknow-  
ledge it to be deriued  
from God the *fountaine of*  
*goodnesse*, that heere in the  
Riuers of Creatures thou  
maist begin to tast of that  
Fountain, as *St. Francis* did.  
Whereof read *St. Bonauenture*  
in the life of *St. Francis*  
the ninth Chapter.



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## THE FIFT STEPP.

*From the Consideration of  
the ayre.*

THE element of *Ayre* may be to men a notable document in manners, if the nature thereof be considered: For it not onely teacheth them *Morall Philosophy*, but also declareth the mysteries of *Diuinitie*, and eleuateth the minde vnto God, when as the manifold commodities thereof are pondered, which by Gods Ordinance is affoordeth vnto mankinde.

First therfore the Ayre serueth for *aspiration or breathing*

H 3

and

Cap. I

- I

and thereby preserueth the life of man, and of terrestriall liuing Creatures.

Secondly, it is so necessarie for sight, hearing and speach; that without it, (though nothing els were wanting) none could see, heare, or speake.

2 Lastly, without ayre, there could be no Motion among men, and other terrestriall liuing creatures; so that all artes and sciences must needs cease and haue end. Let vs begin with the first part.

If men would vnderstand, that the soule needeth her Aspiration or breathing as much as the body, many should be saued which now perish.

The body needeth continuall

nuall breathing, because the naturall heate wherewith the hart boyleth, is so tempered by the longues which drawe in the coole ayre and cast out the hott, that life is thereby preserued; without which it could not be. Whereupon it is commonly said : *That those things which breath, doe liue; And those things which breath not, liue not.* And thou my soule, (that thou maist by Gods grace liue a spirituall life) dost also want thy continuall breathing, which is performed by sending forth warme sighes in thy prayers to God; and receauing from God new grace of the holy ghost. For what els doe those words of the Lord im-

Luk. 18

port. *It becometh alwayes to pray and not to be weary?* But that thou must alwaies sigh and receaue a new spirit, that the spirituall life be not quenched in thee. Which thing he repeateth when he saith:

Luk. 21

*Watch therefore praying at all times.* And the Apostle confirmeth the same in his first

1 Thes. 5

Epistle vnto the Thessalonians saying: *Pray without intermission.* With whom agreeth St. Peter the Apostle

1 Pet. 4

in his first Epistle when as he writeth: *Bewise therefore and watch in prayers.* For true wisdom willett vs, to aske Gods help at all times, which at all times we stand in neede of. Our heavenly Father knoweth indeede what

what we want, and is ready to giue vs abundantly, especially if it belong to our eternall saluation : but he will giue it vs by meanes of prayer; for that is more to his honour and our profit, then if he should giue vs all thinges when as we sleepe and doe nothing.

Therefore our most liberall Lerd doth exhort and vrge vs to aske when he saith : *Aske and it shall be giuen you : Seeke and you shall finde : knocke and it shall be opened to you. For euery one that asketh, receaueth ; and he that seeketh findeth : and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.* And what is chiefly to be asked,

Luk. II

and what without doubt shall be granted, he declareth a little after saying : *If you then being naught knowe how to giue good giftes to your children, how much more will your father from heauen giue the good spirit to them that aske him ?* This good Spirit therefore is chiefly to be daily asked ; which doubtlesse will be giuen vs if it be well asked ; whereby we may breath in God, and by breathing in him preserue our spirituall life. So did holy *Dauid* who said in the psalme :  
*I opened my mouth and drewe breath.* That is, I opened my mouth crauing with vnexplicable sighes, And I drew the most sweete breath of Gods spirit, which hath cooled the heate

Psal. 118



heate of my concupiscence,  
and strengthened me in euery  
good worke. which being  
so, who can say that they liue  
to God who in whole dayes,  
monthes, and yeares sigh not  
after him, nor breath in him?  
Not to breath is an euident  
signe of death; therefore if  
to pray be to breath, it is an  
euident signe of death not to  
pray. The spirituall life wher-  
by we are made the sonnes of  
God, consisteth in charitie;  
See (saith St. Iohn in his Epi-  
stle) *what manner of Charitie*  
*the Father hath giuen vs, that*  
*we should be named and be the*  
*sonnes of God.* And who is  
there that loueth, but desireth  
to see the thing he loueth?  
who desireth any thing and  
asketh

1 Ioh. 3

asketh not, when he knoweth that for asking it shall be giuen him? Therefore, who so doth not dayly pray to see the face of his God; desireth not to see him: if he desireth not to see him he loueth him not: if he loueth him not, he liueth not. What then followeth, but that we account them dead to God, although they liue to the world, which doe not giue themselues to prayer. And yet such are not said to pray and thereby to breath and liue, which with their corporall voyce pray onely: For prayer is defined by the learned to be *an eleuation of the minde vnto God, and not of the voyce into the ayre.*

Therefore my soule deceaue  
not

not thy selfe, thinking thou dost liue to God: vnlesse thou seeke God withall thy hart, and sigh after him day and night. Say not that thou canst not for other businesse; giue thy selfe to prayer and spirituall exercises. For the holy Apostles were most busied, but indeed in the worke of God and saluation of soules, so that one of them sayde: *Beside those thinges which are outwardly: my dayly instance, the carefulnesse of all Churches. Who is weake and I am not weake? Who is scandalized, and I am not burnt? And yet the same Apostle beside the often commemoration of his prayers, writeth vnto the Philippians: our conuersation is*

2 Cor. II

Philip. 3

Gal. 2

is in heauen. For in the midst of businesse, in desire he was in heauen, els would he not haue said : *With Christ I am nayled to the Crosse And I liue not now I: but Christ liueth in me.*

Cap. 2

It is an other property of the ayre : & be the *Medium* or meanes whereby colours and soundes come to our eyes and eares, without which we could not see, heare, or speak. Wherefore we ought greatly to thanke God that it hath pleased him to beautifie our nature with so singular a benefit. We ought also to admire the wisdom of our maker in a worke of so great subtilitie; For although the ayre be a true body, and so  
great

great that it filleth almost an infinite space; yet it is neither scene nor felt, by reason of the vncredible raritie thereof. The auncients did wonder at the smalnesse of a lyne which *Apelles* had drawne with a pencill; but that line was scene and touched; and therefore not to be compared with the thinnesse of the ayre, which couereth and compasseth all, and yet is scene of none. And it is the more to be wondred, that the ayre being so thinne a body, yet being diuided, it closeth againe together, with meruaylous facilitie, and remaineth as if it had neuer bin diuided. Truly it is not possible for an Artizan so to amend a Spiders broken

broken cob web, or the rent  
of a very thinne *Veyle*; but  
that the former renting  
will appeare. It is also  
most worthy of admirati-  
on, and onely belongeth  
to the wisdom of God,  
to cause innumerable kindes  
of colours to passe to-  
gether without confusion  
through the same part of the  
ayre. For he who shall stand  
in a high and open place in  
the euening when the moone  
shineth, and behold the hea-  
uen full of starres, and fieldes  
full of flowers, with hou-  
ses, trees, beastes, and o-  
ther things of like sort;  
cannot denie but that the  
Species or formes of those  
things are conteyned in  
the

the *Ayer* next vnto him altogether without confusion. But who can conceiue this? For how can it bee that so thinne a body should containe together such variety of formes? And what if at the same time and place, Birdes sing, Instruments of musicke play, and Waters falling make a noise, are not those soundes or *Formes of Soundes* receiued altogether, with so many colours or formes of colours in the same *Ayer*? Who doth these thinges O my Soule but thy Maker, *Who onely* doth great wonders?

And if his workes are so wonderfull how much more wonderfull is hee himselfe?

And

An other commoditie also the ayre affoordeth by reason of the exceeding raritie thereof; For it helpeth the motion of all things that re. move from place to place. We al knowe with what labour shippes are towed through the waters albeit they are liquid and easily diuided. For sometimes neither Windes nor Oares suffice, but the strength of horses and *Buffaloes* must be added. And if perhapps a way be to be made through hills and Mountaines although but short; yet in how long time and with what labour is it performed? But in the ayre horses runne, birdes flye, and arrowes and Dartes are shot with great facilitie



facilitie and speed : men also  
goe vp and downe about  
their businesse and mooue  
their feet, armes, and handes,  
vpward, downeward and on  
either side ; And yet the ayre  
though it be euery where and  
of a corporall nature, hinde-  
reth them no more then if it  
were a spirit or nothing at  
all.

Lastly, the ayre giueth  
place to euery thing, chan-  
geth it selfe into euery forme,  
and is diuided and broken for  
the commoditie of men ; so  
that, it may seeme to teach  
them humilitie, patience and  
charitie. It representeth like-  
wise vnto them, the vncredi-  
ble *sweetnesse* and *exceeding*  
*bountie* of the maker thereof.

Recollect

1 Cor. 9

Recollect therefore thy selfe  
 O my Soule, and diligently  
 consider that thy Lord God  
 is alwayes present with his  
 Creatures, and alwayes  
 worketh with them; and  
 which is a token of *Infinite*  
*sweetnesse*, cooperateth with  
 the nature of euery one, as if  
 hee should say with his Apo-  
 stle: *To all I became all things*  
*that I might saue all.* Necessa-  
 ry *Agents* hee causeth to  
 worke necessarily; Volunta-  
 ry *Agents* voluntarily; and  
 free *Agents* freely. He mo-  
 ueth and helpeth the Fire to  
 ascend, the Earth to descend,  
 the Water to runne into  
 steepe places, the Ayer to  
 passe which way soeuer it  
 is driuen, the Starres to  
 mooue

mooue alwayes circularly: Hearbes, Shrubbess and Plants to beare fruite according to their nature: Beastes of the earth, Fishes and Fowles to do such thinges as their *Kind* doth require. And if the *Sweetnesse* of God appeareth so plainly by cooperating with his Creatures in the workes of Nature, what shall we thinke of the workes of *Grace*? Truly God hath giuen Man free-will, yet so, that it is ruled by his Commandements, terrified by his punishments, & allured by his benefites. *God would haue all men to bee saved,* Yet his will is that they also should haue a will thereunto; and therefore hee doth so sweetly preuent, incite,

1 Tim. 2

Isay 12

Gen. 3

incite, lead and direct them, that it is admirable to consider. These are the inuentions of Gods Wisdome whereof *Isay* speaketh : *Make his inuentions knowne among the people.* Wicked men sometime he doth vehemently terrifie, sometime louingly expect, sometime mercifully admonish, as he thinketh most agreeable to there natures and conditions. Heare how mercifully God dealt with the first sinner. *Adam* (saith he) *where art thou?* Who answering, *I heard thy voyce in Paradize, and I feared because I was naked, and I hid me;* God mercifully replied : *Who hath told thee that thou wast naked, but that thou hast eaten of the*

*the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat? And Adam being admonished by this pious correction, did repent, for the Scripture saith: She (the wisdom of God) kept him that was first made of God Father of the world, and she brought him out of his sinne. Heare againe how mercifully God corrected the Children of Israell by his Angell, and prouoked them to repentance: The Angel of our Lord went vp (saith the Scripture) from Galgal to the place of weepers, and said: I brought you out of Aegipt, and haue brought you into the Land, for the which I sweare to your fathers: and I promised, that I would not make frustrate my*  
*Couenant*

*Wild. 10**Iudg. 2*

covenant for ever : Onely so, that you should not make a league with the Inhabitants of this Land, but should overthrow their Altars : and you would not heare my voyce : why haue you done this ? And when the Angell of our Lord spake these wordes to all the Children of Israel : they lifted up their voyce, and wept. And the name of that place was called the place of Weepers, or of teares : and there they immolated hostes to our Lord. And that it was a great and generall lamentation, and a signe of true repentance ; the new name giuen to that place beareth perpetuall record ; For it was called the place of Weepers, or of teares. What shall I say of the Prophets ?

phets ? They euery where  
teach and proclaime that God  
desireth not the death of sin-  
ners, but that they would be  
conuerted and liue. *It is com-  
monly said* (saith God by Hie-  
remy) if a man put away his  
wife, and she departing from  
him, marry another man, will he  
returue to her any more ? But  
thou hast committed fornication  
with many louers : Neuerthe-  
lesse returue vnto me saith our  
Lord and I will receiue thee ?  
And by Ezechiell : Thus you  
haue spoken, saying : Our ini-  
quities, and our sinnes are vpon  
vs, and in them wee fade away :  
How then can wee liue ?  
Say to them, thus I saith  
our Lord God : I will not  
the death of the Impious,  
I but

Ezech, 18  
Hier, 3

Ezech, 33

Psal. 102

but that the impious. conuert  
from his way, and line. Conuert,  
conuert yee from your most euil  
wayes : and why will you dye O  
house of Israell ? But to omit  
the wicked, none can expresse  
the more then fatherly or mo-  
therly loue which our Lord  
sheweth to those that feare  
and hope in him. David in  
the Psalmes saith: According  
to the height of Heauen from  
Eearth: hath he strengthened his  
mercy vpon them that feare  
him. And after: As a Father  
hath compassion of his Children,  
so hath our Lord compassion, on  
them that feare him. And a-  
gaine: The mercy of our Lord  
from euerlasting, and vnto eu-  
erlasting, vpon them that feare  
him. And in another place:

Tap



Tast yee and see that our Lord is sweet: Blessed is the man that hopeth in him. And againe: How good is God to Israell, to he that are of a right heart? That is, who can expresse the great goodnesse, mercy and sweetnesse of God vnto righteous soules? God also saith by Esay: Can a Woman forget her Infant, that she will not haue pittie on the Sonne of her wombe? And if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee. And Hieremy in his Lamentations: Our Lord is my portion, said my soule: therefore will I expect him. Our Lord is good to them that hope in him, to the Soule that seeketh him. It is good to waite with silence for the saluation of God.

Psal. 33

Psal. 72

Isay. 49

Lamen. 3

2 Cor. I

If I should set downe more-  
ouer what the Apostles say in  
their Epistles of the loue of  
God towards the righteous,  
I should neuer make an end.  
Let that stand for all which  
St. Paul hath writ in the be-  
ginning of his last Epistle to  
the *Corinthians*: *Blessed be the  
God and Father of our Lord  
Jesus Christ, the Father of mer-  
cies, and God of all comfort,  
who comforteth vs in all our  
tribulation: That wee also  
may be able to comfort them, that  
are in all distresse.* Hee saith  
not *God is a comforter*, but  
most full of all comfort:  
Nor that hee comforteth vs  
in some tribulation, but in  
all tribulation: Nor that  
wee may bee able to comfort  
them

them that are in some distresse, but in all distresse. So that hee could not more sett forth the mercy of God, to those whome hee loueth and by whome he is beloued.

But to conclude, it shall not bee amisse to set downe the wordes of St. *Prosper*, in which he declareth the mercy of God not onely to the righteous, but also to the wicked to make them righteous: *Gratia omnibus iustificationibus principaliter preemmet &c.* Grace (saith he) doth chiefly excell all iustifications, by perswading with exhortations, by admonishing with examples, by terrifying with dangers, by incyting with miracles, by giuing understanding,

Lib. 2, de  
voc: gen-  
uam c. 26

by inspiring counsaile, by illuminating the heart and inducing it with the affections of faith. But yet mans will is toyred and adioyned therewith. Which therefore is incited by the former helps, that it should cooperate with the diuine worke in it selfe, and begin to rise for merite, what from heauenly seeds it conceived for exercise, proceeding from selfe inconstancy if it decay and from the assistance of grace if it increase; which assistance is giuen vnto all by innumerable wayes either secret or manifest; and that it is refused of many, proceedeth from their wickednesse: But that it is receiued of many, is a worke of Gods grace and mans will. Thus he.

Cap. 4

Goe too now my soule, if  
thy

thy maker bee so *Sweete and mercifull* ; suffering Sinners with incredible benignitie to conuert them ; and comforting the righteous , that they may increase the more in vertue : Oughtest not thou to beare meekely with thy neighbours , and to be con-  
*All things to all men, that thou* 1 Cor. 9  
*must gaine all vnto thy Lord*  
*God ? Thinke with thy selfe,*  
to what high excellency the Apostle doth exhort thee when he saith : *Be yee therefore*  
*followers of God, as most* Ephe. 5  
*deare Children : And walke in*  
*Love, as Christ also loved vs,*  
and deliuered himselfe for vs an oblation and hoast to God in an odour of sweetnesse. Imitate God the Father who maketh  
I 4 his

Mat, 3

his Sunne to rise vpon good and  
bad, and raineth vpon iust and  
vniust. Imitate God the Son,  
who taking humane Nature,  
spared not his owne life to  
deliuer vs from the power  
Of darknesse and eternall dam-  
nation. Imitate God the holy  
Ghost, who infuseth plenti-  
fully his most precious  
giiftes into vs, to make  
vs being carnall, to  
become spiri-  
tuall.



THE SIXT STEPP,

*From the Consideration  
of the Fire.*

THE Element of *Fire* is  
so pure and noble, that  
God himselfe would be  
called fire as *Moses* and  
*St. Paul* witnes saying : *Our  
Lord is a consuming Fire.* And  
when God first appeared vn-  
to *Moses*, hee appeared in a  
flame of Fire burning a bush  
and not consuming it : *Our  
Lord appeared (saith Moses) in  
a flame of Fire, out of the midst  
of a bush : And he saw that the  
bush was on fire, and was not  
burnt.* And when the same  
God came to giue the Law

Cap. 1

Deut, 4  
Heb, 12

Exod 3

Exo. 19

A&amp; 2

vnto the people, hee came in the forme of fire. For so speaketh *Moses*: *All the Mount Sinai smoked: For because our Lord was descended vpon it in Fire.* According to the similitude of which mystery, when as the new Law was to bee promulged; the holy Ghost appeared vnto the Apostles in fiery tongues. Those spirits also which are most neare to God in Heauen, are called *Seraphins*, that is to say *Fiery*, because they are more inflamed with the *Fire of Diuine Love*, then other Angells. Which being so, it is not a thing difficult for vs, from the element of Fire, and the nature and properties thereof, to frame a *step* by which through prayer



prayer and meditation wee may Ascend vnto God. For surely it is more easie to Ascend with *Elias* in a Chariot of Fire; then of *Earth*, *Water* or *Ayre* to make a *Ladder*.

Let vs therefore consider the properties of the *Fire*. The fire is of such a nature, that in diuers thinges it worketh after a diuerse, and often after a contrary manner. Wood, Hay, and stubble it burneth presently : Gold, Siluer, and precious stones it maketh more pure and bright : Iron which of it owne nature is blacke, colde, hard and heauy ; the Fire so changeth into contrary quallities, that forthwith it becommeth white, hot, soft and light ; yea to shine

shine like a starre . to burne like fire, to melt like water, and to bee so light, that the Smith may easily mooue and remoue it as he pleaseth.

1 Cor, 3

All these thinges doe manifestly agree vnto Almighty God. For Wood, Hay, and stubble according to the Apostle in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians* signifie *Evill workes* which cannot indure the fire of Gods *Iudgement*. And truly it is vncredible how greatly all sinne displeaseth God who is a *Most pure Fire*; and with what zeale he consumeth and destroyeth it, if by repentance it may be destroyed, that is, If the sinner bee in state to repent : But if hee be not capable of repentance

tance, ( as the Deuils are not,  
normen after this life ) then is  
Gods wrath turned vpon him.  
For to *God the impious and his  
impiety are odious alike* saith  
the wise man. And how ex-  
ceeding great this hatred is  
the Deuill can witnes, who  
sinned once, and being a most  
noble Angell, and (as St. Gre-  
gory saith ) *Prince* of the first  
*Order*, and the most excellent  
of Gods Creatures; was not-  
withstanding presently cast  
downe from Heauen, depri-  
ued of all beauty and superna-  
turall grace, changed into a  
most deformed monster, and  
condemned vnto eternall pu-  
nishment. Our Sauiour Christ  
can witness, who descended  
from Heauen to destroy the  
*Workes*

Wis, 14

Greg. lib.  
; 2, moral  
c, 24, ali-  
as 18

Ioh. 3

Ioh. 1

Phil. 2

2 Cor. 8

Luk. 9

Ioh. 1

1 Pet. 2

*Workes of the Deuill, to wit  
 sinnes, and therefore hee is  
 called The Lambe of God that  
 taketh away the Sinnes of the  
 world. But who is able to de-  
 clare or conceiue what our  
 Sauour suffered to destroy  
 the workes of the Deuill, and  
 perfectly to satisfie the iustice  
 of God? Who when hee was  
 in the forme of God, tooke the  
 forme of a Seruant: Being  
 made poore for vs when as he was  
 rich. Hee had not where to re-  
 pose his head, albeit hee made  
 Heauen and Earth. He came  
 into his owne, and his owne re-  
 ceaued him not. Who when hee  
 reuiled, did not reuile; When hee  
 suffered, he threatned not, but  
 deliuered himselfe to him that  
 indged him vniustly. Who him-  
 selfe*

*selfe bare our Sinnes in his body  
 upon the tree. He humbled him-  
 selfe, made obedient unto death,  
 euen the death of the Crosse. By  
 whose stripes wee are healed.  
 Lastly hee was mocked, spit-  
 ten on, whipped, crowned  
 with thornes, and being cru-  
 cified with exceeding igno-  
 miny and paine, he rendred vp  
 his life, to destroy the workes  
 of the Denill, and to wipe a-  
 way our sinnes. The Law of  
 God can witnes, which pro-  
 hibiteth and punisheth all sin;  
 yea leaueth not *one idle worde*  
*unpunished.* How greatly then  
 doth God abhorre enormous  
 crymes, that cannot indure  
*one idle worde*? The Law of  
 our Lord is immaculate, the pre-  
 cept of our Lord lightsome  
 detesting.*

Phil, 2  
 1 Pet, 2

Mat, 11

Psal. 18

2 Cor. 6

detesting sinne *and darkenesse* for betweene *light and darknesse. iustice and iniquitie*, there can be no society. Hell also can witnesse which God hath prepared for sinners, who when as they had time, neglected or refused to be washed with the *blood of the immaculate Lambe*. For it is iust that they who haue committed *Eternall finnes*, should haue eternall punishments. But what and how great the paines of Hell are, is horrible to thinke. Whereof we wil speak more in the last step.

Therefore my soule, since Gods hatred is so great against sin, if thou louest God above all things thou oughtest also to hate sinne  
above

about all thinges. Take heed they deceaue thee not, who vse to extenuate or excuse sinne. Looke also that thou deceaue not thy selfe with false reasons; for if sinne displease thee not both in thy selfe and others, thou louest not God, and if thou louest not God, thou art vndone. Againe, if thou bee not vngratefull vnto Christ, how greatly mayst thou reckon thy selfe indebted to his loue, laboures, blood and death? Who hath washed thee from sinne, and reconciled thee to his father. And shall it then be greivous vnto thee, to suffer somewhat for Christ, or for his sake by his grace to resist sinne euen vnto blood?

Lastly

Eccle. 21

Lastly, if thou canst not patiently indure the *Hell of eternal fire*, surely thou oughtest not patiently to indure sinne, but *As from the face of a Serpent flye from it*, and from euery light occasion or suspicion thereof. Endeauour therefore all thou mayst to hate sinne aboute all things, and to loue God aboute all things.

Cap. 3

1 Cor. 3

The fire also destroyeth not but perfecteth and purifieth golde, siluer and pretious itones, : For (as the same Apostle doth there declare) those mettalls signifie good *workes* which are approoued by the fire of Gods iudgement : These workes God doth approoue because they are his giiftes ; *And when he crowneth*



crowneth our merits (saith St' Augustine Con. 2. in psal, 70  
he crowneth his guiftes. For  
they are done by his com-  
mandement, assistance and  
powre, and by the lawe and  
precepts which he hath ap-  
pointed.

Gold also signifieth the  
Workes of Charitie: and how  
can the workes of Charitie  
but please God, since God  
himselſe is Charitie? Silver  
signifieth the workes of Wis-  
dome, to wit of them that in-  
struct many unto iustice. And  
they also are very pleasing  
and acceptable vnto God:  
For the Wisdome of God saith:  
He that shall doe and teach: he  
shall be called great in the king-  
dome of heauen. Pretious  
stones

1 Ioh. 14

Dan. 12.

Mat. 5

Eccle. 26

Math. 13

Math. 19

Isay 56

stones are the workes of a continent soule, of which Ecclesiasticus speaketh: *All Weight is not worthy a continent soule.* And that is the cause why in the office of the Church, the Gospell of *One pretious Pearle found* is read in the praise of holy virgins. And how greatly the puritie of virginitie is pleasing to God, may be vnderstood by the Prophet *Esay*, who by Gods appointment and in his name prophesied vnto such Eunuches as haue gelt themselves for the Kingdome of heauen; *I will giue vnto them in my house, and with my walles a place, and a name better then Sonnes and Daughters: An euertlasting name will I giue them*

them which shall not perish. Which place St. *Augustine* in his booke of holy virginities, excellently declareth to be vnderstood of holy virgins of either sex. And these three sortes of workes by the consent of Doctores, are rewarded with *Crownes of Gold* in the kingdome of heauen. For Crownes of gold, to wit certaine rewardes beside eternall life, are giuen to Martyres, Doctores, and virgins. To Martyres for their excellent charitie, because *Greater loue then this no man hath, that a man yeild his life for his friends.* To Doctores for their excellent wisdom, of whome *Daniel* speaketh: *They that instruct many to Iustice,* shall

De Sanct  
virg.c. 21  
& 24

Ioh. 15

Dan. 12

Apoc. 14

shall shine as starres vnto perpetuall eternities. To virgins for their vnualueable chastitie; for which cause the virgins in the Apocalips are said to sing a New song that no man els could say: These are they (saith St. Iohn) which were not defiled with women. For they are virgins, and follow the Lambe whether soeuer he shall goe.

Neither shall the charitie of Martyres, wisdome of Doctors, and puritie of virgins onely be approoued by the fire of Gods iudgement, and fully rewarded: but also all other good workes done in charitie; shall be esteemed as vessells of golde, and endure that diuine fire and receiue their reward. For to them

them will our Lord say at the day of Iudgement : Come ye blessed of my Father, possesse you the Kingdome prepared from the foundation of the world.

Mat. 25

You who haue giuen bread to the hungry, drinke to the thirstie, lodging to strangers, clothing to the naked, and comfort to the sicke, and such as are in prison. And the same Lord promiseth also that *Whosoener shall out of charitie* *giue a cup of cold water, onely in the name of a Disciple he shall not lose his reward.*

Mat. 10

Dost thou vnderstand O my soule how great is the difference of Workes? And what then can be more fond and miserable, then hauing time and place wherein (if thou

Deut. 32

thou be wise) thou maist easily gather gold, siluer and precious stones to seeke rather with great labour after wood, Hay and stubble? *O that thou were wise and understood, and would provide for the last things,* when all these Workes shall be examined and tried in the fire of Gods iudgement; and the former shall be praised and crowned; but the latter shall be burned to smoake and ashes.

Why dost thou now choose that which doubtlesse thou wilt repent to haue chosen? And why dost thou not now for thy profit dislike, what heereafter thou wilt without profit condemne? And if perhapps thou see it not now,  
for

for that the veyle of thinges  
present is drawne before  
thyne eyes, that they  
cannot beholde the cleere  
and simple truth; Pray  
vnto God, and with great  
deuotion say vnto him  
with the blinde man in the  
Gospell: *Lord grant that I*  
*may see,* and with the Pro-  
phet: *Reueale mine eyes:*  
*and I shall consider the mer-*  
*uailous thinges of thy Lawe.*  
For truly it is meruai-  
lous, that workes donne in  
Charity, become Gold, Siluer,  
and precious stones: but  
such as are not done in  
Charitie, are turned to wood,  
hay and stubble.

Luk. 18

Psal. 118

Cap 3

Let vs now consider the o-  
ther propertie of the fire

K

For

For hetherto we haue learned from it what God doth with those that depart out of this life with euill workes, or in good workes perseuer vnto the end. Now by another resemblance, taken also from the fire, we may vnderstand what God worketh in those whome he calleth from sinne to repentance.

A sinner is like Iron, which so long as it is kept farre from the fire, is blacke, colde, hard and heauy: But if it be put in the fire, it becommeth white, hotte, soft and light. Every sinner wanteth inward light, and walketh in darkenesse, and therein resembleth the blacknes of Iron. For although he seeme skilfull in humane



humane science, and excell  
in vnderstanding and iudge-  
ment therein; yet is he blinde  
in iudgement of the true good  
and euill, and more miserable  
then any blinde man. For a  
blinde man seeth nothing, and  
therefore goeth not without  
a guide: but a sinfull man  
thinketh that he seeth what  
he seeth not; or seeth one  
thing for another; iudging  
good euill, and euill good,  
great little, and little great,  
long short, and short long:  
And therefore he is euer de-  
ceiued in his choyce. So spea-  
keth the Apostle of the Panim  
Idolaters: *Hauiug their vn-  
derstanding obscured with dark-  
nesse, by the ignorance that is in  
them, because of the blindenesse*

Eph. 4

Math. 15  
23

Isay. 42

Isay 43

*of their hart. Therefore our Lord himfelfe alfo in the Gospel doth fo often reprove the Scribes and Pharifies faying: They were blinde, and guides of the blinde. And the Prophet Ifay fpeaking to the Iewes of his time faith: Heare ye deafe, and ye blinde behold to fee, to whom he prophefieth, that Chrift fhould come and open the eyes of the blinde: And fpeaking of the new Testament in the perfon of God he addeth: Bring forth the blinde people, and having eyes: the deafe and hee hath eares. Moreover the wicked after this life will confefle that this is true, when their punishments fhall begin to open y<sup>e</sup> eyes of their mindes, which*

which their offences had shut: *We therefore (say they) have erred from the way of truth, and the light of iustice hath not shined to vs, and the sunne of vnderstanding rose not to vs.* Neither is it to be meruayled, although they are blinde which are auerted from God in vnderstanding and will. *For God is light, and no darknesse is in him.* Whereupon the same Apostile concludeth: *He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother: is in the darknesse euen till now.* And a little after: *He that hateth his brother: is in darknesse, and walketh in the darknesse, and knoweth not whether he goeth, because darknesse hath blinded his eyes.*

Wis. 5

1 Ioh. 2

Wisd. 2

Neither is it the onely cause of blindenesse in sinners for that they are turned from God *Who is light*, but also because *Their malice hath blinded them*, as the wise man speaketh: For loue, hatred, anger, enuy, and other such like passions of the minde, which are comprehended vnder the name of Malice; so blinde the minde that it cannot see the truth; & they are as coloured spectacles & make white things seem red; or else so framed, y they make great thinges seeme small, & small thinges seeme great, things far off seeme neere, and thinges neere seeme far off. He that is in loue, thinketh the thing he loueth most faire, profitable

ble, good and necessarie, and before all other thinges to be procured. Againe, he that hateth the same thing, iudgeth it most deformed, vnprofitable, euill and hurtfull, and before all other thinges to be forsaken. But if this blacke and deformed Iron be put into the fire, that is, if the sinner begin to auert from sinne, and conuert himselfe to God according to that of the Prophet: *Come ye to him, and be illuminated*, then he beginneth by little and little to receaue light, and to see the truth in that light, according to the saying of the same Prophet: *In thy light we shall see light*, And then breaking in peeces the coloured spectacles of

K 4 passions,

Psal. 33

Psal. 35

passions, and taking the *Chrystaline* of pure Charitie; he will esteeme eternall thinges great, and temporall thinges small and of no moment, as indeede they are.

Then he shall cleerely see that no created beauty is to be compared with that *light of Wisdome and Trnth* which is God and in God. So that he may crye out with St. *Augustine Serote amani, &c. Late haue I loued thee O auncient beantie but vew to me, late haue I loued thee.*

Lib. 10,  
conf, cap,  
77.

And because Christ saith: *Tee shall knowe the trnth, and the trnth shall deliner you,* he that is so illuminated with the light of *Trnth*, and freed

freed from the bonds of concupiscence, couetousnesse, ambition and other passions, may reioyce with the Prophet and say : *Thou O Lord* *hast broken my bondes : I will sacrifice, to thee the Host of prayse and I will invoke the name of our Lord.*

*Psal. 115*

Moreover the fire doth not onely make Iron that is black to become bright; but also that is colde to become hot, yea so fiery & burning, that it seemeth to be fire it self. Great is our Lord, and great is his power, which causeth a man that is cold by nature, and fearfull to speake, or to vnder take any difficult thing: So soone as he is heate with the fire of Charitie,

Phil. 4

to become as bold as a Lyon that terrifieth all with his roaring, and to whome nothing seemeth difficult; so that he may say with the **Apostle St. Paul** who was greatly inflamed with this fire: *I can all thinges in him that strengthneth me.*

But let vs speake particularly of this efficacie of the fire; And first let vs breifely treat of the efficacie of words and then of the efficacie of deedes. There are at this day many preachers of Gods word in the Church, and euër haue bin. What then is the cause that notwithstanding the exhortations and exclamations of so many men, so fewe are conuerted?

Truely



Truely in great Citties and Townes euery day in the Lent, twentie, thirty, or forty Orators declame : and yet when Lent is done, there appeareth almost no change in the manners of the Cittizens and Townsmen. The same vices, the same sinnes, the same coldnesse, the same loosenesse is still scene. I finde no other cause hereof, but that for the most part, learned, eloquent, and copious sermons are preached: but the soule is wanting, the life is wanting, the fire is wanting; and to be short; that great charitie is wanting which onely can animate and quicken the wordes of the speakers, and inflame and change the

the hartes of the hearers. Neither say I this, but that many Preachers haue lowdnesse of voyce, and action of body: for Gunnes without either bullet or stone make a great noyse when they are discharged, but to no purpose. That which is desired, is, that they would shewe great zeale to God and the gaining of soules, not faynedly but truely, not strēyned but naturally flowing from the fountaine of the hart. Saint *Peter* was ignorant of Rhetoricke; he onely was expert in guiding his Boate, and in casting and amending his Nettes: yet so soone as the holy Ghost descended vpon him in  
fierie

fiery tongues, and replenished him with feruent Charity ; he presently began to speake so powerfully, feruently, and effectuously in the midst of the Citty *Ierusalem*, that with one Sermon hee conuerted many thousands to belecue and doe penance. Yet wee reade not that in his Sermons he vsed much straining of the voyce, or wearisome motion of the body.

Act, 2

Saint *Bonauenture* reporteth , that *St. Francis* was vnlearned , and that hee neuer studied the Art of Rhetoricke ; yet when hee Preached to the people , hee was heard as an Angell from Heauen. For his wordes (saith hee) were like *burning Fire* in-

Cap. 2,  
vit. St. Fr.

Eccle. 43

inflaming the *heart*. And as it is related in the Chronicles of the *Minors* cap. 30. when once after dinner he spake on the suddaine a few wordes to the people ; they were all so mooued to repentance, that the same day seemed *Good Friday*. Whence proceeded so great fruite from so fewe wordes ? Truly because that holy Preacher was *Like a burning coale*, and his worde as a *burning torch*, as *Ecclesiasticus* writ of *Eliu*. We haue the written Sermons of *St. Vincentius*, *St. Bernardine*, and some other Saintes, which scarce any will vouchsafe to read, because of the exceeding plainnesse of *Stile* which is found in them : And yet we

we knowe that by their preaching many thousands of men haue beene conuerted to God, and themselues were euer heard with incredible concourse and attention; because indeed their plaine and simple wordes, proceeded from fiery and zealous hearts.

Moreouer the efficacy of this Diuine fire is shewed as much in deedes, as in wordes: God determined by *St. Peter* the Apostle to subdue *Rome* the chiefe Citty of the Empire and Lady of Nations vnto himselfe.

He determined also to send the rest of the Apostles, some into *Ethiopia*, some into *India* some into *Scythia*, some into the farthest part of *Britany*,

to destroy by them the Idols of the world, to erect the standard of the Crosse, to change Lawes and customes, and to ouerthrow the tyranie of the Deuill. If any one had foretolde these thinges vnto the Apostles, when they fished in the Lake of *Genesareth*; or when they fled away and hidd themselves at our Lords Passion; they would haue seemed dreames, or olde wiues tales: And yet soone after, all these thinges came to passe, and by no other force, but by the *Fire of Charity*, which the holy Ghost enkindled in their heartes: For *Charity casteth out Feare, suffereth all thinges, hopeth all thinges: Thinketh all thinges possible*

1 Ioh. 4  
1 Cor. 13

possible, and cryeth out with the Apostle: *I can all thinges in him that strengthneth me.* So that we see by the worke and labour of these men onely armed with *Charity*, Idolatry was in short time extinguished throughout  $\bar{y}$  world, Churches euery where founded to the honour of Christ, and the *Standard of the Crosse* without army of soldiers or prouisiō of war erected in all kingdomes.

Phil, 4

The *fire* also hath a property to make hard Iron so soft,  $\bar{y}$  it may easily be attenuated and extended into plates, and brought to any forme. Fire hath great power ouer Iron; but the power of God ouer the obstinate, and obdurate hearts of men is farre greater.

Cap. 4

Heere

Lib. I. c. 2

Heer St. Bernard in his bookes of Consideration : *Solum est cor durum &c.* It is onely a hard heart (saith he) that abhorreth not it selfe, because it feelth not. What then is a hard heart ? It is that which is neither cut with compunction, mollified with piety, nor moued with Prayers. It careth not for threatnes, by punishments it is hardened : It is ungratefull for benefites, incredulous to counsaile. And after: It is that which neither feareth God, nor Man. All which to be true Pharaoh can witnesse, who the more he was punished by God, the more he was hardened, and the more Gods mercy appeared in remoouing his punishments, the more was he animated



mated to despise and contemne God. But when our Lord is pleased to enkindle one spaike of the fire of his true loue in a hard heart; presently it waxeth soft and melteth like waxe; so that no obstinacy (though neuer so continuall and obdurate) can hinder it; And of a heart of stone, it becommeth a heart of flesh; For when the spirit of our Lord bloweth, Waters will flowe from the frozen Snowe. We haue an example in the Gospell, of that woman that was a Sinner in the City, whome neither the admonitions of her Brother, reprehensions of her Sister, honour of her Family, nor her owne shame could moue to abstaine from sinne;

Psal. 147

Luk. 7

sinne ; And yet one *beame* of Christ peircing her heart, and there enkindling a sparke of Diuine loue, did so strangely alter her ; that being a Noble woman, she blushed not in a publicke Feast to cast her selfe at Christes feete, *All weeping* with her teares to bathe them and with her haire in steede of a towell to wipe them , oftentimes most louingly to kisse them, and with a most precious & odoriferous oyntment to annoint them, signifying thereby , that from thenceforth she bequeathed her selfe and all that was hers, vnto the service of Christ. Therefore she heard that saying of our Sauour : *Many* *sianes* are forgiven her, because  
*she*

Luk, 7

she bath loued much. But it shall not be from our purpose to sett downe another example also of late time. *Willam* duke of *Aquitane*, liued in the time of *St. Bernard*; a man most wilfull and obstinate, In defending *Anacletus* the Scismatical Pope against *Innocentius* the lawfull. He banished all the Catholicke Bishops out of his Countrey, and tooke an oath that hee would neuer be at peace with them; and because all men knewe him obdurate in wickednesse and cruelty, and terrible for his pride; there was none that durst admonish him. It pleased God by his seruant *Bernard* to visite the hard heart of this man,  
and

and to kindle a great sparke of Diuineloue therein. Presently of a Lyon he became a Lambe, humble of proude, and most obedient of most obstinate. For at one onely worde of *St. Bernard*, hee friendly imbraced the Bishop of *Poyters*, and with his owne hand placed him in his Chaire. And (which seemeth to surpassse all admiration) demaunding of a certaine Hermit remedy of soule for his sinnes past; He was commanded by the same Hermit, to weare a coate of Brasse next his skin, so buckled, that it could neuer be put off, and presently hee obeyed and it was so donne: And being sent by the Hermit to the Pope for absolution,

tion, he went ; But the Pope suspecting that hee did not heartily repent ; or else desirous to try his patience ; commanded him to goe on Pilgrimage to *Ierusalem*, to demand absolution of the Patriarke of that Citty : Without delay he vndertooke that journey , and fulfilled the Popes commandement.

Lastly of a potent Prince, he became an humble monke ; So that in that age, there was scarce any found to surpasse him in humility, patience, pouerty, deuotion and piety. *This (indeed) is the change of the right hand of the heighest,* this is the force of the Diuine fire, against which no heard heart can resist.

*Psal. 76*

There

Psal. 4

Wild. 9

Eccle. 40.

There remaineth the last property of the Fire, which is to extenuate heavy thinges, and cause them easily to mount aloft. And this is the cause why men that burne not with y<sup>e</sup> fire of Diuine loue, are heauy of heart, and to them the Prophet said : *How long are you of heauy heart ? Why loue you vanity, and seeke lying ?* This also is the cause why The body that is corrupted burdeneth the soule as the wise man saith. *And an heauy yoke upon the Children of Adam, from the day of their comming forth of their mothers wombe, untill the day of their burying, into the mother of al saith Ecclesiasticus.* And what this heauy yoke is, which in this mortall body

so burdeneth the soule, the same Author declareth a little after when he addeth: *Fury, Envy, Wauering, Feare, Anger* and such like, commonly called the *Passions of the minde*. These so depresse the minde of Man, that it beholdeth nothing but earth, to which it cleaueth in such sort that it cannot *ascend to seeke God* nor speedily run the way of his Commandments. But when the fire of God beginneth from aboue to inflame it; forthwith those passions begin to diminish and be mortified, and this heavy burden to wax lighter; And if the heate increase, it will so vnburthen the hart, that it may flye vp like a Dove, & say with the Apostle:

L

O. r.

Phil. 3

Psal. 111

Luk. 12

*Our conuersation is in heauen. And being also dilated by this fire it may say with Dauid: I haue runne the way of thy commandements, when thou hast delate my bars. Truly since our Sauour said? I came to cast fire on the earth: and what will I but that it be kindled? We haue seene many so enlightned therewith, that they haue wholly forsaken the loue of honour, pleasure, and wealth, and haue said to Christ ascending into heauen: Draw vs after thee.*

*This hath caused so many Monasteries to be erected, so many desertes to be inhabited, so many companies of virgins to be instituted, who did not onely with ease runne the*



the way of the Commandements; but also ascended into the way of Counsells *To follow the Lambe whether soeuer he shall goe.*

Apoc. 14

O Blessed fire which giueth light, and wasteth not, and if it waste, it wasteth but the peccant humors that life be not extinguished thereby. Who will cause me to be inflamed with this fire which with the light of true Wisdom expelleth the darknesse of ignorance, and blindenesse of an erroneous conscience? And which changeth the coldenesse of slothe, indeuotion, and negligence into the heate of loue? That it neuer suffer my hart to be hardened, but with the heate thereof to

Psal. 85

be mollified and made deuout; And that it take from it the heany yoake of earthly cares and desires; that with the winges of holy contemplation (wherewith Charitie is nourished and increased) it may be so lifted vp, that I may say with the Prophet: *Make ioyfull the soule of thy seruant, because to thee O Lord, I haue lifted vp my Soule.*



THE

THE SEVENTH STEPP,

*From the Consideration of Hea-  
uen, to wit of the Sunne,  
Moone and  
Starres.*

Cap. I

**W**E shall not labour  
much in this place  
from the conside-  
ration of Heauen,  
to frame for our selues a Stepp  
to contemplate God; for we  
haue the kingly Prophet go-  
ing before vs, who in the  
Psalmes saith: *The Heauens*  
*shew forth the glory of God, & the*  
*Firmament declareth the workes*  
*of his hands.* And because there  
are two seasons to wit the day  
& night in which we may  
*from the consideration of heauen,*  
*ascend*

Psal. 18

Psal. 18

ascend vnto God with the wings  
of contemplation, of the first he  
writeth in the same Psalme:  
He put his Tabernacle in the  
Sunne: and himselfe as a Bride-  
groom, comming forth of his  
Bride Chamber. He hath re-  
ioyced as a Gyant to runne the  
way, his comming forth from  
the toppe of heauen, and his re-  
course euen to the topp thereof:  
neither is there, that can hide  
himselfe from his heate. Of the  
latter, he writeth in an other  
psalme; I shall see the heauens,  
the workes of thy fingers: The  
Moone and the Starres, which  
thou hast founded.

Psal. 8

Let vs begin with the first  
season. Of the Sunne which  
dayly we behold, the holy  
Ghost by the mouth of  
David

*David singeth foure prayſes; First that it is Gods Tabernacle. Secondly, that it is exceeding beautifull. Thirdly that it alwaies runneth moſt ſwifely without ſtay. Fourthly, that by giuing light and heate, the vertue thereof eſpecially appeareth. By reaſon of all which, Eccleſiaſticus hath written: A mer- ualious inſtrument, the worke of the Higheſt. Great is our Lord that made it.*

*Eccle. 4*

First, then God hath put his *Tabernacle in the Sunne*, as in a moſt noble creature; for that among all corporall thinges, he hath choſen the Sunne as a Princeiy Pallace or diuine Sanctuary to dwell in. God truly filleth heauen

Hier, 33

2 Par, 2

and earth, *And the heauen,*  
*and heauens of heauens containe*  
*him not;* but yet he is said to  
 dwell there cheifely, whereby  
 working meruailous thinges  
 he sheweth greater signes of  
 his presence. And because  
 the Hebrew text saith, *He hath*  
*prae a Tabernacle for the Sunne*  
*in them,* to wit, in the heauens:  
 We gather by this place of  
 the psalme an other excellen-  
 cie of the sunne which doth  
 not contradict the former.  
 The Sunne is a great thing,  
 for which God hath prepared  
 a most spatiuous, beautifull,  
 and noble Pallace; for he  
 would haue heauen it selfe  
 to be the pallace of the Sunne,  
 that it might therein freely  
 walke and worke: and the  
 Sunne

Sunne to be the Pallace of  
himselſe who ruleth all. As  
therefore we knowe the great  
excellencie of the Sunne, be-  
cauſe that heauen is the Ta-  
bernacle thereof, So we may  
knowe the great excellen-  
cie of God, becauſe the  
Sunne is his Tabernacle; A  
meruailous Inſtrumēt doubt-  
leſſe, then the which there  
is nothing among corpo-  
rall creatures more to be  
admired.

Moreouer *Dauid* to de-  
clare by thinges knowne,  
the excellent beautie of  
the Sunne; compared it  
to a *Bridegrome* comming  
forth of his *Bride-Cham-  
ber*. For men neuer a-  
dorne themſelues more,  
or

or seeke more to shewe their comelinesse and beauty, then when they are bridegroomes; for then they exceedingly desire to please the eyes of their spowes, whom they most dearly loue. But if we were so neere the Sunne as to discern what and how great it is, we should not then neede to vse the resemblance of a Bridegroom, to conceaue the vncredible beauty thereof. Truly the beauty of colours dependeth of light, and the light fayling, the beauty of colours soone fadeth away. Nothing therefore is more beautifull then light. For which cause God (*Who is beantie it selfe*) would be called *Light*. God (saith *St. Iohn*



St. Ioh. ) is light, & no darkenesse  
is in him. Among corporall  
things also, there is nothing  
brighter then the Sunne, and  
therefore nothing more beau-  
tifull then it. The beauty of  
things belowe and specially  
of men, fadeth in short time,  
but the beauty of the Sunne  
is neuer altered or diminished  
but at all times with equall  
brightnesse shineth vnto all.  
Do we not see how all things  
as it were reioyce at the rising  
of the Sunne? Men goe a-  
bout their businensse cheer-  
fully, the windes blow sweet-  
ly, the flowers open, the  
hearbes spring vp, and the  
birdes sing pleasantly. Wher-  
upon the olde blinde Tobias  
when the Angell said vnto  
him

I Ioh, 1

Tob. 5

him Ioy be to thee alwaies,  
Answered; What ioy shall be  
to me which sit in darke-  
nesse and see not the light of  
beauen?

Consider then my soule, and  
thinke with thy selfe; if the  
Created Sunne doth so re-  
ioyce euery thing at his ri-  
sing, what will the incre-  
ated Sonne doe ( which  
is without comparison  
more beautifull and bright)  
when to the cleane of hart  
he shall rise not to be scene  
for a time but for all eterni-  
tie? And how sorrowfull  
and vnhappy will that houre  
be to the wicked, when they  
shall be sent away to be hu-  
ried in eternall darkenesse  
where neither the increated

nor

nor created Sunne shall euer  
shine ? How great ioy then  
shall that soule haue to whom  
the Father of Light shall say :  
*Enter into the ioy of thy*  
*Lord.*

Mat. 25

Afterward the same Pro-  
phet doth extoll the course  
of the Sunne, which also is  
very admirable : *He hath re-*  
*ioyced* (saith he) *as a Gyant*  
*to runne the way.* A Gyant  
truely if he extend his steppes,  
according to the greatnesse  
of his body, and runne  
as fast as his strength will  
affoord, will in a short time  
passe a long way. And  
indeede the Prophet hauing  
compared the Sunne vnto a  
Bride-groome, thereby to de-  
clare the Beauty therof; after  
also

Cap. 2.

Psal. 18

also compareth it to a Giant, that by that resemblance hee might in some sort shew the most speedy course thereof. But albeit he had not compared it to a Giant, but to the flight of Birdes and Arrowes, or to the Windes and Lightning; yet should it haue bin farre from the thing indeede. For if that be true which with our eyes we see, to witt that the Sunne in foure and twenty houres, passeth about the whole compasse of his Orbe: And if the compasse of the Sunnes Orbe, exceedeth almost without comparision the compasse of the Earth: And if the Compasse of the Earth containeth about twenty thousand miles: all which is  
most

most true : It must then needs follow, that the Sunne euery houre runneth many thousand myles. But why say I euery houre, nay euery quarter of an houre, yea almost euery minute. For whosoever shall obserue the rising or setting of the Sunne, in an open Horizon, as at Sea, or in a plaine field ; shall perceiue the whole body of the Sunne to ascend aboue the Horizon in lesse space then the eight part of an houre ; And yet the Diameter of the Sunnes Body, is much greater then the Diameter of the Earth ; which notwithstanding containeth seauē thousand myles. I my selfe being once desirous to know in what space  
of

of time the Sunne sett at Sea :  
At the beginning thereof, I  
beganne to read the Psalme  
*Miserere*, and scarce had read  
it twice ouer , before the  
Sun was wholly sett. It must  
needes be therefore, that the  
Sunne in that short time in  
which the Psalme *Miserere*  
was twice read ouer , did  
runne much more then the  
space of seauen thousand  
myles. Who would beleue  
this vnlesse certain reason did  
demonstrate it ? And now if a-  
ny should say moreouer, that  
this body, which is so swiftly  
mooued is much greater then  
the whole Earth , and that  
the motion thereof is perfor-  
med, without ceasing or wea-  
rines, so that (if God should  
so

so command) it might continue for all eternity : Surely if hee were not insensible, he could not but wonder at the infinite power of God. Truly therefore writeth *Ecclesiasticus* : *That this is a marvellous Instrument , the worke of the Highest, and great (deubiles) is our Lord that made it.*

There remaineth also the efficacy of the Sunnes light and heate, wherof *David* speaketh : *Neither is there that can hyde himselfe from his heate.* This one bright body being placed in the midst of the World, giueth Light to all the Starres, to all the Ayer, to all the Sea, and to all the Earth, and with his quickning heate causeth all Plants, Corne and  
Trees,

Cap. 3

Iam, 1

Trees throughout the world, to budde, blōssome and beare fruite : and vnder the earth, it also produceth all kindes of Mettals. Therefore St. Iames in the beginning of his Epistle compareth the Sunne to God : *Euery best giift* (saith hee) *and euery perfect giift, is from above, descending from the Father of Lightes, with whom is no transmutation, nor shadowing of alteration.* The Sunne indeede, is the Father of corporall Light ; as God is the Father of spirituall Light ; Yet in three thinges there is great vlikenesse betweene God, and the Sunne.

First the Sunne needeth continuall *Transmutation*, to giue light and heate to the whole



whole World ; but God is wholly euery where and needeth no *transmutation*. And therefore Saint *James* saith : *With whome there is no transmutation.*

Secondiy the Sunne ( for that it alwayes changeth places ) causeth by turnes day to some , and night to others , shining to one people , and setting to another : But God is neuer changed , and yet is present with euery one , and therefore *Sc. James* addeth : *There is with him no shadowing of alteration.*

Lastly ( which is the chiefe ) from the Sunne ( the Father of corporall Light ) all things proceed which growe on Earth : And *those things are good ;*

good ; Yet not excellent nor perfect, but small, temporall and transitory, and which make not men good, because they may be abused, as they are by many to their destruction. But from God (the Father of Spirituall light) Every best giift, and every perfect giift, doth descend by which the possessors thereof are made better and more perfect ; These giiftes none can abuse ; and whosoever perseuereth in them vnto the end, shall come to that true Happinesse which is defined to be *A state of all good thinges perfectly united together.*

Seeke therefore my soule  
What these best giiftes, and  
perfect giiftes are, which  
come

*come from aboue and descend  
from the Father of Light ;  
and when thou hast found  
them , endeauour all thou  
canst to keepe them. But  
thou shalt not neede to  
seeke farre , for the Sunne  
doth demonstrate them suf-  
ficiently vnto thee. The  
Sunne by his light and  
heate ( which are the Guiftes  
of the Father of Corporall  
light ) produceth all thinges :  
So also The best guiftes and  
perfect guiftes which are,  
from aboue , and descend from  
God the true Father of  
Light ; are the Light of Wis-  
dome, & Heate of Charity. The  
light of Wisdom ( which ma-  
keth vs truly wise, & leadeth  
vs to the Heauenly fountaine  
of*

of *Wisdom*) teacheth vs to contemne thinges Corporall, and esteem thinges Eternall; *I Tim, 6* It teacheth vs: *Not to trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the liuing God.* It teacheth vs not to make this banishment our Countrey, nor to loue this Pilgrimage; but to endure it. Lastly it teacheth vs to holde this *Life in patience*, which is so full of dangers and temptations, and death in desire, because: *Blessed are the dead that dye in our Lord.* The order of true charity, is to loue God without end, who is the end of all desires: And to loue other thinges so farre foorth as they shall be needfull to obtaine that Happines. Truly there  
is

is not any among the Children of men, who will proceed so absurdly in the cure of his body, as to loue a *bitter Potion* better then his health; For he knoweth that the one is the *end*, and the other is but the meanes to obtaine that end. How then commeth it to passe, that so many who would be accounted wise, keepe no measure in heaping together riches, in following the pleasures of the flesh, & in getting degrees of Honour, as if in these things consisted the end of Mans desire: But in louing God, and in seeking after eternall Happinesse, they are content with so little, as if it were the meanes to the end, and not the

the end of all other thinges? Truly the reason is, because they haue the Wisdome of this World, and not the *Wisdomewhich is from above, descending from the Father of Light.* And because their loue is not orderly, therefore it is not true loue, which cannot be but orderly; for they are full of Couetousnesse, which is not from God, but from the World. Thou therefore my soule whiles thou art a Pilgrim from thy Countrey, and among enemies which oppugne true Wisdome and Charity, and call subtiltie Sapience, and couetousnesse Frugality; Sigh from the bottome of thy heart to the Father of Light that it would

would please him to cause  
those best *guises* and perfect  
*guises*, to with the light of  
true Wisdome, and the heare  
of orderly Charity to descend  
into thy heart, that being re-  
plenished with them, it may  
ruine without stumbling in  
the way of Gods Commaun-  
dements, and come to that  
Countrey where they drinke  
of the *Fountaine of Wisdome*, &  
liue by the milke of Charity,

I come now to the Night  
season, in which the Heauen  
by the Moone and starres ma-  
keth vs a *stepp* to ascend vnto  
God. For so speaketh *David*:  
*Because I shall see thy Hea-  
uens, the worke of thy fin-  
gers: The Moone and the  
Stars, which thou hast founded.*

Cap. 4

I sal. 8

If we could see *Heauen it selfe*, the Prophet would not haue said (declaring in a manner what before he set downe) *The Moone and the Starres, which thou hast founded.* For then doubtlesse we should haue an excellent *Ladder* to ascend vnto God. We know there were some who defined the Nature of the Heauens, by the motion of the Starres, to be a *Fist essence*, simple, incorruptible, and alwayes circularly moouing; And wee know there haue bin others also, who would haue Heauen to be the Element of *Fire*, not moued circularly, and in some partes corruptible. But we seeke not after opinions; but certaine knowledge, or  
Doctrin



Doctrin of faith, that wee may frame thereby a *firme Ladder* to know God. We will therefore from the Moone and starres which we see, erect a *Ladder* with the Prophet, as we haue done already from the Sunne, the Fountaine of Corporall light.

The Moone hath two properties, which may helpe vs to *Ascend vnto God*. First the neerer it commeth to the Sunne, the lighter it is in the higher part next to Heauen, & the darker in the lower part next to Earth : And when it is vnder the Sunne, and ioyned therewith ; then is it wholly light toward Heauen, and darke toward Earth : Again, when it is opposite

against the Sunne, it shineth at Full to the inhabitants of the Earth, and hath no Light in the higher part towards Heauen. This property of the Moone may teach men how carefull they ought to be of their nearenesse, subiection, and coniunction with God the Father of *Light*. The Moone signifieth Man, the Sunne, God. When the Moone is opposite against the Sunne, then with her light borrowed from the Sunne, she onely beholdeth the Earth, and turneth her backe as it were to Heauen: Therefore she then appeareth very beautiull to the Inhabitants of the Earth; but very deformed to those in Heauen:

Euen

Euen so, Men when they are  
farr from God, (as y<sup>e</sup> prodigall  
Son that departed frō his Fa-  
ther, & went into a far Coun-  
trei) then doe they abuse the  
light of reason, which they re-  
ceiued frō him, to behold the  
earth onely, & are altogether  
occupied in getting y<sup>e</sup> wealth  
therof. And then of the chil-  
dren of this world, they are  
accounted wise, and happy:  
But of the heauenly Cittizens  
they are esteemed *Poore, and  
blinde, & naked, deformed and  
miserable.* Againe when the  
Moone is vnder y<sup>e</sup> Sun or very  
near it, she then shineth in the  
higher part, and onely behol-  
deth Heauen, turning as it  
were her back to the Earth &  
vanishing from y<sup>e</sup> eyes of men.

Apoc. 3

Col, 3

Euen so, when a sinner begin-  
neth to returne vnto virtue,  
and to be truely subiected vn-  
to God ( the true Sunne of  
Soules ) by Humility, and  
ioyned vnto him by Charity:  
then will he fulfill that which  
the Apostle aduiseeth : *Seeke  
the thinges that are aboue, where  
Christ is sitting on the right  
hand of God, and minde the  
thinges that are aboue, not the  
thinges that are vpon the Earth.*  
And then shall hee be dispised  
by fond Worldlings and ac-  
compted a dead man. For in-  
deed he is dead to the world.  
*And his life is hid with Christ  
in God. But when Christ shall  
appeare, his Life : Then he al-  
so shall appeare with Christ in  
Glory, as the same Apostle  
saith*

faith in that place.

And this is the cause (as *St. Augustine* in his Epistle to *Ianuarins* hath noted) why the Pasch of our Lord neither in the olde or new Law, could be rightly Celebrated vntill the full Moone were past, to witt, vntill the Moone which at the full is opposite, beginneth by conuersion, to returne to coniunction with the Sunne. For God by this ecclestial Planet would shew, how by the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, Man that was opposite vnto God by his iniquity, should begin to returne vnto God, and by the merites of Iesus Christ, seeke to vnite himselfe vnto his grace.

Epist. 19  
c. 4, 5, 6

Eccle, 17

But thou my soule, if  
perhapps by Gods grace thou  
finde thy selfe subiected in  
true humility vnto *the Father  
of Light*, and ioyned vnto him  
in feruent *Charity*, doe not  
imitate fooles who *Are  
changed as the Moone*, but  
*imitate Wise men which remaine  
as the Sunne*, as *Ecclesiasticks*  
witnesseth. For the Moore  
increaseth quickly, and de-  
creaseth. But if thou be wise  
abandon not grace once re-  
ceiued; depart not from it;  
for nothing canst thou finde  
better in any place: Neither  
knowest thou hauing once  
lost it, whether thou shalt re-  
turne to it any more; for  
hee that promised pardon  
and grace vnto the penitent,  
hath

hath not promised the *Guift* of repentance, or a long life vnto thee. Therefore thou mayest without feare, turne thy backe to the Earth, and behold *thy Sunne*. Rest, delight, and remaine in him. Say with the Apostle St. Peter : *It is good for vs to be here* ; And with the Martyr Ignatius : *It is better for me to liue with Christ, then to rule the Earth*. Care not what they thinke of thee which loue the world ; for he is not approued whom the world cōmendeth ; but whom God cōmendeth

Mat. 17

Epist. Ad  
Corm.

The Moone hath also another property, which God is accustomed to vse towards his elect. For the *Moone* governeth the

Cap. 5

M 5 night

Gen. 7

Psal. 135

Apoc. 21

2 Cor. 5

2 Pet. 1

*night as the Sunne the day saith Moses in Genesis, and David in the Psalmes; but the Sun shineth all day long; the Moone sometime in the night casteth a great light, sometimes a small, and sometimes none at all. So God (like the Sunne) alwayes shineth vpon the holy Angels, and blessed Soules, which inioy perpetuall day, (For there shall be no night there saith St. Iohn in the Apocalips) but in this night of our Pilgrimage and banishment, In which we walke by Faith, and not by Sight. And Attend to holy Scripture, as to a candle shining in a darke place, as St. Peter saith in his last Epistle; God (like the Moone) doth sometime visite and illuminate*



minate our hearts : and sometime leaueth vs in the darknes of desolation.

Yet thou oughtest not my soule to be too sorrowfull, albeit thou enioy not the *Light of consolation* ; nor reioyce too much, if shortly after thou breathe in the *Light* of comfortable Deuotion ; For God is as the Moone, and not as the Sunne, in the night of this world. Neither doth hee onely appeare vnto vs poore and vnperfect creatures, sometimes as a Moone full of the *Light of Consolation* and sometimes without *Light* leaving vs in the darke night of *Desolation* : For the Apostle St. Paul the vessell of election, who was rapt into the

2 Cor. 12

2 Cor. 7

Rom, 7

21 Cor. I

Third Heauen, and heard secret wordes, which is not lawfull for a man to speake, saith sometimes : I am replenished with Consolation, I doe exceedingly abound in ioy in all our tribulation, And sometimes he sigheth and lamenteth saying : I see another Law in my members, repugning to the Law of my minde, and captiuing me in the Law of sinne, that is in my members. Vnhappy man that I am, who shall deliuer me from the body of this death. And in his last vnto the Corinthians: We will not haue you ignorant Brethren concerning our tribulation which hath happened in Asia, that we were pressed aboue measure, aboue our power, so that it was tedious vnto vs euen to line.

line. And thus ( as St. *Iohn Chrysostome* noteth) God dealeth with all his Saints ; to wit not suffering them to haue continuall tribulations, nor to enjoy continuall consolations ; but in an admirable varietie of prosperitie and aduersitie to spend as it were their liues. **Thus** much of the moone.

Hom. 8  
in Math.

The Starres also are numbered among the ornaments of heauen, of which *Ecclesiasticus* saith : *The glory of the starres is the beauey of heauen :* but he presently addeth : *Our Lord illuminating the world on high.* For all the beauty of the Starrs, Sunne and Moone, proceedeth from God the Father of light ; neither doth the

Cap. 6

Eccle. 43

Baruch, 3

the Sunne by day, or Moone and starrs by night giue light; but it is *Our Lord* that dwelleth *on high*, who by the Sun, Moone & starrs giueth light to the world. For it is he who as the Prophet *Baruch* speaketh: *Sendeth forth light, and it goeth, & hath called it, & it obeyeth him with trembling. And the starrs haue giuen light in their watches, and reioyced, they were called, and they sayd, here we are: & they haue shined to him with cheerefulnesse that made them.* By which words, the infinite power of God is signified, who did in a moment produce and cause to worke bodies so great and beautifull. And to shine to him with cheerefulnesse that made

made them, is with such readi-  
nesse to obey their maker, as  
if in obeying him they were  
greatly pleased and deligh-  
ted. And surely it is a thing  
much to be meruayled; that  
the starres moouing so spee-  
dily and continually, and  
some performing their course  
so slowly, and some so swift-  
ly in their seuerall orbes: yet  
they alwayes keepe such mea-  
sure and proportion together,  
that from it ariseth a most  
sweete and pleasing harmo-  
nie. Wherof God speaketh  
in the booke of *Iob* when he  
saith: *Who shall declare the*  
*manner of the heauens, and the*  
*harmony of heauen who shall*  
*make to sleepe?* This is not  
the harmony of voyces or  
foundes

*Iob. 38*

foundes heard with corporall  
cares, but the harmony of  
proportion in the motions of  
the starres, heard onely with  
the eare of the Haite. For all  
the starres of the firmament  
passe with the like speede a-  
bout the whole compasse of  
heauen, in foure and twenty  
houres; And the seauen Pla-  
nets or wandring starres, are  
mooued some swifter & some  
flower; So that the starres of  
the Firmament seeme to beare  
the plaine song (to speake af-  
ter the vulgar manner) and  
the Planets to modulate a  
sweet and continuall kinde of  
*Descant*. But these things  
are aboue vs, and this Har-  
mony is heard onely by them  
that are in Heauen, and vnder-  
stand

stand the reasons of these motions. The starrs also keepe a iust measure alwayes in turning round; and therefore they seeme to daunce continually in heauen like honest virgins skillfull in that art.

But thou my soule ascend a little higher if thou canst, and by the great brightnesse of the Sunne, the beauty of the Moone, the multitude and varietie of the other lightes, the admirable harmony of heauen, and delightfull dauncing of the starrs; Thinke what it will be to beholde God *aboue heauen*, to wit *That Sunne that inhabiteth light, not accessible*; to behold the virgin Queene of heauen, who being faire as the Moone, reioyceth

1 Tim. 6

reioyceth the Cittie of God.  
To behold the quires and orders of Angells which being more in number, and brighter then the starres, *adorne the Emperiall heauen.* To behold the soules of Saintes among the companies of Angels, as Planets among the starres of the Firmament. And lastly, to heare the songes of pray-ses, and that eternaall *Aleluia* with concording voyces most sweetly to resound in the streetes of that Cittie. Then shall it come to passe that neither the beauty of heauen will seeme great vnto thee, and the thinges belowe heauen (which are small, short and of no value) will be re-iected and contemned.

THE



THE EIGHT STEPP.

*From the Consideration of the  
reasonable Soule.*

**W**E haue hether-  
to passed on-  
ly through corpo-  
rall things, whiles  
we intended from the con-  
templation of creatures to  
ascend vnto the Creator. And  
now we finde the soule of  
Man (surpassing the dignitie  
of all bodies) to be in the  
lowest ranke of spirituall sub-  
stances betweene whom and  
God, there are no other but  
the Hierarchies and Orders  
of Angells.

The soule of man carrieth  
such

Cap. I

such a resemblance with God the maker thereof; that truly I knowe no way more easie for a man to ascend vnto the knowledge of God, then from the consideration of his owne soule. And therefore he is vnexcusable before God if he knewe not God; since from the knowledge of his owne soule, he may by Gods assistance without difficultie attaine thereunto.

First therefore the soule of Man is a spirit; for so the holy Fathers expound those wordes of Genesis: *Our Lord God formed Man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life; And that of Tobias: Command my spirit to be receaved.* And Ecclesiastes

Gen, 2

Tob. 3

clesiaſtes: *Let the duſt returne into his earth, and the ſpirit returne to God who gave it.* For albeit the word ( ſpirit ) agree alſo to the winde, whereof it is ſaid in the pſalme: *The ſpirit of ſtormes,* And in the Goſpell: *The ſpirit breatheth where he will, and thou beareſt his voyce :* Yet there is no doubt but that the *Spirit of ſtormes* is a body which by reaſon of the exceeding raritie thereof, doth neerer immitate a Naturall ſpirit, then any other body whatſoever: but the ſoule of man is a true ſpirit, not a body; neither is it produced out of matter, but created of God. Whereof among Catholiques there is no controuerſie.

Eccleſ. 12

Pſal. 148  
Ioh. 3

Ioh. 4

Heere then beginneth the excellencie of the soule, and her resemblance with God. For God is a *spirit* (saith our Sauour) *and they that adore him, must adore in spirit and veritie.* But although God is a *spirit*, and the soule of man is also a spirit; yet God is a spirit vncreated, the soule a spirit created: whereupon it followeth that there is an infinite difference between that spirit which is the soule, and that spirit which is God. As therefore the soule may reioyce for being a spirituall substance, excelling thereby the heauens and starres in nobilitie of Nature; so ought she also to be humbled vnto God her Maker, because she

is

is made of nothing, and without him of her selfe is nothing.

Secondly, the soule of Man Cap. 2  
is a simple spirit, and therefore  
immortall; for it hath no-  
thing within it selfe that can  
dissolue it, or cause it to dye:  
but as it hath this priuiledge  
aboue the soules of brute  
beastes which dye with the  
bodie; so it ought likewise  
to admire and reuerence the  
excellencye of the Creator,  
who is not onely immortall,  
but also eternall. For there  
was a time when the soule of  
man was not; and by the will  
of Ged onely it tooke begin-  
ning, and may likewise (if  
God so please) be reduced to  
nothing, although in it selfe,  
it

Tim. 6

it hath no cause of corruption. Therefore the Apostle said of God : *Who onely hath immortalitie* ; for he onely can by no power, chance, or reason be dissolued, because he is the *Fountaine of life*.

Cap. 3

Thirdly, the soule of Man hath the light of vnderstanding ; for it not onely decerneth colours, senttes, tastes, soundes, hot, cold, hard, soft, and other such like things which lye open to the senses of the body : But also iudgeth of substances, and of generall and vniversall Notions as well as of particular : Neither knoweth it onely things present ; but also coniectureth of things to come, and mountereth  
by

by discourse about the Hea-  
uens, penetrateth the depth,  
searcheth out causes by ef-  
fectes, and from causes run-  
neth backe to effectes.

Lastly by the light of rea-  
son it ascendeth vnto God  
who *Inhabitetb Light vnac-*  
*cessible*, And of this Light St.  
*Iohn* saith in the Gospell: *It*  
*was the true Light, which light-*  
*neeth euery man that commeth*  
*into the World.* And *Danid*  
in the *Psalmes*: *The Light of*  
*thy countenance O Lord is*  
*signed vpon vs.* And, *Doe not*  
*become as Horse and Mule*  
*which haue no understanding.*

1 Tim. 6

Ioh. 1

Psal. 4

Psal. 31

This is a great dignity of  
the soule, whereby man is  
made like to God, and vn-  
like to Beastes.

N

And

And from hence we may and ought to consider the *Infinite eminency* and subliinitie of God. For the soule is indued with the light of vnderstanding ; but God is *Light* and *Vnderstanding*. The soule discourseth from the Cause to the effect, and from the Effect to the cause, and with great labour getteth knowledge: God seeth all things at once perfectly together. The soule vnderstandeth thinges which are, and therefore her knowledge dependeth of thinges: God by his *Vnderstanding* causeth thinges to be , and therefore their existence dependeth of his knowledge. The soule in some sort coniectureth of thinges to come:  
God



God seeth alwayes all thinges to come, as plainly as thinges past or present.

The Soule wanteth many thinges to exercise the guilt of vnderstanding : As *Object*, *Species*, *Phantasie*, and the like : God wanteth nothing, for his *Essence* is to him all thinges.

Lastly the Soule while it is in the body, cannot see God nor Angels, or it selfe, or any substance truely, though it be Corporall ; many thinges also it knoweth not and is deceiued, coniecturing much by opinion, and comprehending little by demonstration. But God knoweth all thinges without coniecture or error, for *All thinges are naked and* Heb. 4

Heb, 4

1 Cor. 13

Cap 4

open to his eyes as the Apostle speaketh in his epist. to y<sup>e</sup> Heb. If man then esteem his knowledge so much, that the Apostle saith : *Knowledge puffeth up*, how ought hee to admire the knowledge of God, in comparison whereof, all knowledge of man is ignorance.

Fourthly there is another kinde of knowledge in the soule of man, & consisteth not in speculation but in action. Whereupon so many bookes of vertues and vices, so many lawes, ordināces, Institutions & exercises, haue bin written by philosophers, to attaine the knowledge how to liue *well*. By all w<sup>h</sup>, an admirable *light of reason* is discovered to be in man, wherby he far excelleth Beastes.

Beastes. But all thesethings are nothing in comparison of the *Law eternall* which liueth in the minde of God, from whence as from an euersflowing Fountaine, all Lawes and Ordinances haue sprung. For there is one *Law-maker and Iudge*, God, saith St. *James* in his Epistle. *He is Truth, Iustice, and Wisdome: By whom Kinges raigne, and the makers of Lawes decree iust things.*

Iam, 4

Pro, 8

Thou shalt neuer therefore finde out the skill how to liue Well, vntill thou be admitted into the schoole of Christ, *who onely is the true Maister:*

Mat, 23

By his worde and example thou shalt learne that *Iustice which aboundeth aboue the iustice of the Scribes*

1 Tim. 1

Cap. 5

and Pharisees, or of the Philosophers ; the end whereof is : *Charity from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and a Faith not fained.*

Fifthly the Soule of man hath a third kinde of Knowledge, which consisteth in making thinges ingeniously. And truly Spiders know also how to make their cobwebs, Birdes their nestes, Bees their hony, and Foxes their holes: But these Creatures by *Instinct of Nature*, doe the same thinges after one and the same manner : But the soule of man by reason and iudgement, hath inuented innumerable Artes, by which it gouerneth, & ruleth by force all other liuing Creatures.

Neither

Neither can Birdes escape by flight, Fishes by swimming, Lyons and Beares by strength, Horses and Mules by fiercenesse, nor Stagges and Goates by swiftnesse.

For euen Children take birdes, with snares and birdlime; and Fishers with hookes and nettes, catch fishes. And Men by witt and art, include and carry Lyons and Beares, into Iron cages: take wilde Boares and Staggs in Toyles, or kill them with laucelyns, and tame Horses, and Mules, with the bridle, and make them fitt to be ridden on.

What shall I say of the Art of *Nauigation*? How great light of Witt shined in the

soule of Man, when it taught  
great Shippes being heavily  
loaden, not onely to runne  
through the Maine with oares  
like feete, but also to flye  
with Sayles like winges?  
What of *Agriculture*? Who  
will not wonder at mans witt,  
to beholde the Corne fieldes,  
Vineyards, Orchardes, Gar-  
dens, Fish-ponds, & springes  
of Waters brought to irri-  
gate and moysten them?  
What of *Architecture*? Who  
will not admire the Pallaces,  
Temples, Cittyes, Arches,  
Towers, Amphitheaters, Py-  
ramides, and Pillars of stone?  
I omit the Artes of Painting  
and Engraving, by which the  
Countenances of men, and  
other thinges, are so liuely  
expres-

expressed in colours or mar-  
ble, that sometimes they are  
taken for true, & not for pain-  
ted or engrauen. I will say  
nothing of other Artes inuen-  
ted by man either for necessi-  
ty, profite or pleasure, for  
they are so many that scarcely  
they can be numbred.

Giue thanks therefore O  
my soule to God, that it hath  
pleased him to make thy Na-  
ture, so farre different from  
the nature of other liuing  
Creatures : And lift vp the  
eyes of thy minde vnto thy  
said Maker, in whom is the  
true fountaine of that Witt  
and Wisdome, which created  
all thinges. From thence did  
flow all the Witt which is de-  
riued vnto thy Nature. And if

thou dost admire Mans witt,  
because it hath leained how  
to tame wilde Beastes by in-  
dustrie and Art : admire Gods  
*wisdome* much more, whome  
not onely all liuing Creatures  
but also all things without life  
serue & obey. And if it seeme  
much to thee, y Man hath in-  
uented the Artes of sayling on  
the seas, tilling the fieldes, and  
building houses : much more  
let it seeme to thee, that God  
hath built the Heauens, Earth  
and Seas, & all thinges which  
are in them. And lastly if thou  
wonder at y liuely painting in  
colors, or ingrauing in stone.  
Why dost thou not wonder at  
the skill of thy Creator, who  
of clay made a true liuing  
man, and of the ribbe of a  
man



man a true liuing woman?  
Adde also that Man can doe  
nothing without God : but  
God doth all thinges alone  
without helpe of any other.

Sixtly Mans soule hath  
Free-will, in which it is like  
to God and Angels , and  
chiefly differeth from other  
Creatures. This is a great  
and admirable excellency.  
But the *Freedom of Will in*  
*God* is so great, that the Free-  
dome of the soule being com-  
pared thereunto, scarce see-  
meth a *shadow* thereof. The  
Freedom of mans *will* is  
weake , and prone to choose  
thinges euill and hurtfull:  
The liberty of Gods *will* is  
most strong , and can neuer  
faile or be inclined to euill.

Cap. 6

For

For as to dye is an *Infirmity* of a Mortall body, and not to dye an *Ability* of a Glorified body : So to sinne is an *infirmity of Free-will*, and not to sinne will be *an ability of the same Free-will*, when God shall hereafter in Heaven giue vs that by Grace, which he alwayes hath by Nature. Our *Free-will* also is free indeed potentially to *will*, and not to *will*; or actually to *will* & not to *will*: But it cannot doe what it will, or not doe what it will euen in it selfe, and much lesse in others. Heare the Apostle lamenting in his Epistle to the *Romans* : *Not the good which I will, that doe I, but the euill which I will not, that I doe.*

Rom, 7

And which of vs all, but findeth

deth this true by experience. I would pray with attention to God, and I command my imagination not to wander about, and cause me to thinke of other thinges whiles I pray: And yet I cannot keepe it in order, but when I least suspect, I finde my selfe deluded by it, and omitting my prayers, I fall to muse on other matters. I would not be molested with lust, nor angry out of reason, and by Free-will I command the concupiscible and irascible powers which are in me, to obey reason, and not to be seduced by the bodily senses: And yet reason is not obeyed, nor that done which I would, but that which I would not.

But

Lib, 8.  
con, ca. 4

But of all other things it is most admirable & miserable, that the minde cōmandeth & bo- dy, & it presently obeyeth, it cōmandeth it selfe: & it dis- obeyeth. *Vade hoc Monstrum?* Whence is this strange thing (saith St. Augustin) the minde cōma- deth the hand to moue, & it doth with such speede, that the common 'ment can hardly be de- scerned frō the execution thereof, & it is the minde, & the hand a body: The minde comma- deth the minde to be willing, and it is the same thing, and yet it doth it not. But it willeth not fully, and therefore it doth not fully command. It is not there- fore any strange thing but an in- firmitie of the minde, which doth not fully rise, being lifted vp by  
truth,

*truth, and kept downe by custome. But the free will of God is ioyned with absolute power; for of him it is written: He hath done all things whatsoeuer he would, And, There is none that can resist thy will. Wherefore my Soule if thou be wise, doe not boast of the force of thy free will, vntill thou come into the freedome of glory, where thy Heavenly Phisition will cure all thy infirmities, and fill thy desire with all good things. And in the meane while sigh dayly, and say vnto God with the Prophet: Be thou my helper, forsake me not. Not coldly also, & for custome sake, but with attention, and from thy hart, repeate at the least seauen times a day: O*  
*Go*

*Psal. 113*

*Esther 13*

*Psal. 26*

Psal. 69

God intend vnto my helpe, Lord  
make hast to help me.

Cap. 7

Seauenthly, Mans soule  
hath a reasonable will, which  
not onely hath power to de-  
sire good thinges present, par-  
ticular, and corporal, as beasts  
doe: but also good thinges  
absent, vniuersall, and spiri-  
tuall, which are knowne by  
the light of faith or reason,  
vntill it come to the *Highest*  
*Happinesse* which is God.  
This maketh the soule capa-  
ble of vertues, and especially  
of Charitie the Queene of  
vertues. Brute beastes in-  
deede haue the loue of Con-  
cupiscence; but the loue of  
friendship they knowe not.

But thou my soule art by  
God made capable of *Charitie*  
(the

(the Chiefe of all Guiftes) whereby God remaineth in thee and thou in him. For God is Charitie, and he that abideth in Charitie, abideth in God, and God in him. And if the Happinesse of a created will be so great, what may we think of the Happinesse wherewith the increated will is filled? Onely the will of God is capable of infinite loue, wherewith the infinite goodnesse of God is worthy to be loued. Neither doth his will want vertues, or needeth to be directed by his vnderstanding; for they are all one, as Wisdome and Charitie in God is the same thing.

Eightly, the soule of Man is in the body; but farre otherwise

I Ioh. 4

Cap. 8.

wile then the soules of brute  
beastes in their bodies. The  
soules of brute beastes are  
materiall, and extended ac-  
cording to their bodies : so  
that a part of it, is in a part of  
their body, and the whole, in  
their whole body. But the  
soule of Man (because it is an  
indiuisible spirit) is after an  
admirable manner *Whole in*  
*all, and whole in euery part* : so  
that, albeit it fill all the body,  
yet it occupieth no place in  
the body : And when the bo-  
dy groweth, the soule grow-  
eth not ; but beginneth to be  
where before it was not. And  
if a member be cut away, or  
withered ; the soule is not de-  
minished, nor withered, but  
ceaseth to be in that member  
where



where before it was, without hurt or mutilation. This is a true resemblance of Gods existence in Creatures. For God is an indiuisible spirit: and yet he filleth all the world and euery part thereof. Neither doth he occupie any place: But is *Whole in all, and whole in euery part of the world*: And when any creature is produced, God beginneth to be in it, and yet he is not mooued: And when any creature is by chance destroyed, or dyeth: God is not destroyed or dyeth: but ceaseth to be in it, without locall mutation.

Thus farre then, God and the soule agree: but in many things, God (as it is meete) doth farre excell. For the soule

soule (before it can moue and gouerne the body) must become the forme of the body, and be so vnited vnto it; that of the soule and body is made one Man. But God, needeth not become the *forme or soule of the world* : Neither of him and the world, is one Compounded substance made: For his immencitie is such, that he is euery where : his indiuisible vnitie such, that he is wholly euery where : And his omnipotencie such that he worketh euery where.

Moreouer, although the soule be said to be in all the body : yet it is not properly but in the partes which haue life ; and therefore it is not in the humors, in the hayre, in the

the nayles, or in dryed and dead members : But God is in all thinges both corporall and spirituall without exception ; neither can it be that anything exist wherein God is not. The soule also is but

in her owne body which is narrow and straight, & where all the partes are continued together : But God is in this vniuersalitie of thinges, although it be very great, and the partes thereof not continued together, but contiguous and adioyning. And if more worldes were made, God should be in them all : for of him it is written : *The heauen and heauens of heauens doe not containe thee.* And albeit new heauens and earthes were

t Par. 6

were multiplied without end  
God should fill them all, for  
no place can be where he  
should not be.

Ninthly, the soule of Man  
(beside those things which  
are said) hath also in it an ob-  
scure image of the *Blessed Tri-  
nitie*; because it hath a power  
to remember, to vnderstand,  
and to loue : and also for  
that the minde doth by the  
vnderstanding *Forme a word* :  
and from the minde and the  
word proceedeth loue : For  
that which is knowne by the  
minde and represented by the  
Word as Good, is forthwith  
by the *Will* loued and desired.  
But God the Father did after  
a more high and diuine man-  
ner begett God the Word, and  
God

God the Father, and God the Word, breathed out the holy Ghost, the living Fountaine of all chasteloue.

And therefore the myserie of the Trinitie doth surpasse all naturall knowledge; neither can a learned Philosopher attaine thereunto without supernaturall light. For the soule of Man produceth a Word, and a loue which are not substances, but accidents; and therefore no persons: But God the Father did beget the word consubstantiall to himselfe: And the Father and the word, breathed out the holy Ghost consubstantiall likewise to them both. Therefore the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost are truly three persons.

persons. The soule of Man also, produceth a Word which continueth not long: and the Will produceth a loue which lasteth not long: but God the Father did beget *The Word eternall*, and the Father and the Word did breath out the holy Ghost *eternall*, For God cannot be without his Word and Spirit. Furthermore the soule of Man, by one Word representeth but one thing: and therefore it multiplyeth the wordes not onely of the Minde, but also of the mouth. The will of Man likewise must produce many actes of Loue, if it will loue many thinges: but God with one Word speaketh all truth, and with one Acte of loue

loue, loueth all good thinges.

Tenthly and lastly, the soule of man whiles it is in the body; is not seene, heard, mooued, nor scarce conceiued to be there: and yet from it all good thinges are deriued to the body: as sense, motion, speech, subsistence, beauty, strength and the like; For how could a man see, heare, speake, walke, subsist, and be strong, faire, and amiable, vnlesse his soule were in him? And why doth he not after he is dead, see, heare, speake, and mooue, but because his soule is departed, from whence these benefites proceeded? Even so, thy God O my soule, whiles he liueth in thee by his Grace, maketh thee

Cap. 10

( )

to

to see what Faith sheweth thee, and to heare what he speaketh in thee : That thou mayest walke in the *Way* of the Cominaundements to-wardes the Heauenly *Hierusalem*, and speake in prayer to God, and in good exhortations to thy neighbour, and subfist perfcuering in good workes, and be strong in battaile againft thy inuifible enemies, and thereby become beautifull in the eyes of the inuifible God and his Angells.

But take heede leaft Gods grace departing from thee, ( which is the life of thy foule ) thou fall into the loffes of the Firft death : And from it be carried to the



the second death, frō whence  
is no Resurrection.

O that thy God would  
open the eyes of thy minde,  
that thou mightest behold  
the beauty of a Soule, that  
is vnitēd to him in Char-  
ity? What place hee prepa-  
reth for it? What ioyes hee  
promiseth it? How louingly  
hee looketh on it? And with  
what longing, it is expected  
by the Angells and blessed  
Soules? Then wouldest thou  
not endure that so great  
beauty should be blemished  
with the least spott. And if  
it should so happen, thou  
wouldest endeavour to wash  
it away with floudes of  
teares. For so did St. Fran-  
cis (as Saint Bonanenture

reporteth) who although he could not follow the immaculate Lambe without some spot; endeauoured notwithstanding to purge and cleanse his soule with daily shewers of teares, from all spottes of offences whatsoever. Againe, if thy God would open thy inward eyes, that thou mightest see the deformity of a Sinfull soule, how it stinketh like a rotten carcasse, and how both God and his Angels reiuise to looke thereon, although perhaps it dwell in a beautifull body very pleasing to y<sup>e</sup> eyes of men: surely thou wouldest be so affrighted, that by no meanes thou wouldest become such a one, nor long continue in such estate.

## THE NINTH STEPP.

*From the Consideration of  
Angells.*

WE are come to the  
highest Stepp of  
*Ascension vnto*  
God, from created  
substances. For if wee  
speake onely of Naturall per-  
fection; there is no created  
substance higher then that of  
*Angells*. First therefore we  
will consider *Angells* accor-  
ding to their excellency of  
Nature: Secondly according  
to their sublimity of Grace:  
And lastly according to the  
Offices which they execute.

Cap. I

For it is not our meaning

to enter into a full Disputation about Angells ; but onely to touch such thinges as may helpe vs, to eleuate our mindes to God. If an Angell then be compared vnto Mans reasonable Soule ; it may fitly be called a *perfect Soule*, euen as the soule may be called an *vperfect Angell*. For so of man spake the Prophet by reason of his Soule when he said : *Thou hast diminished him a little lesse then Angells.* An Angell is a *Perfect Spiritual Substance* : the Soule an *Vperfect Spirituall Substance*, because it is the *Bodies Forme* and but one part of Man. Therefore an Angell is all Spirit ; Man partly Spirit, and partly flesh ; or partly  
an

Psal, 8

an Angell, and partly a beast. As if one should say; An Angell is all of golde; Man partly of golde, and partly of clay. The Prophet then said truly: *Man is minished little lesse then Angels.* And it is also true, that the soule of man, because it is a part of man, is little *lesse* then an Angell. Whereupon it followeth, that an Angell is more like to God, then a man or his soule, for God is a Spirit, and not a *Body* or *Forme* of of a body.

And yet notwithstanding this resemblance of an Angell vnto God; God is a spirit infinitely excelling the dignity of an Angel. For God is a Spirit *vncreated, eternall, immense*

*Almighty, onely Good, onely Wise, onely High.* It then my soule thou wilt confesse, that thou dost with reason admire the Nature of *Angells*: How much more oughtest thou to admire and reuerence the Nature of God, who without all comparison, excelleth them?

Cap. 2

Neither in Nature or substance onely may an *Angell* be called a perfect *M n*, and *Man* an imperfect *Angell*: but also in knowledge and vnderstanding. For man (because hee useth his ministry of his senses and discouerseth from effectes to causes, and from causes to effectes) vnderstandeth with labour, and by degrees attaineth vnto knowledge: where-  
vpon

vpon he oftentimes doubteth,  
oftentimes is deceiued, and  
seldom findeth out the *Truth*:  
But an *Angell* beholdeth at  
once the effectes and causes  
together, seeth the *Substance*  
with the *Accidentes*, and spi-  
rituall thinges with corpo-  
rall.

Man therefore, whiles hee is  
a *Pilgrim* on earth, in vnder-  
standing is not a little lesse,  
but much lesse then *Angells*:  
So that albeit hee excell in  
Witt, and in the study of  
Philosophy: Yet in com-  
parison of an *Angell*, he may  
truely be accounted a *Childe*  
or sucking Infant.

Not vntuely therefore spake  
ſy Prophet of vs mortall Men:  
*Out of the month of Infantes.* Psal. 8

Eccle. 1  
Ecclef. 3

and Sucklings, thou hast per-  
fited praise. Heare what the  
wise Salomon iudged of our  
Wisdome, wherewith we are  
so puffed vp. *All thinges  
are hard* (saith he) *Man can-  
not explicate them in Wordes.*  
And againe, God hath deliue-  
red the World, to their disputa-  
tion; that man cannot finde  
the Worke, which God hath  
wrought from the beginning to  
the end. If all thinges then  
are hard, and which man can-  
not explicate: And if man  
vnderstand nothing in this  
visible world, from the  
first Creature to the last, I  
say nothing so perfectly  
as that hee is able to ex-  
plicate the Nature, Pro-  
perties, Accidents, and secret  
virtues



virtues thereof : Into what errors shall he fall , if hee vndertake to search out the thinges which are aboue Heauen,

Therefore if thou be Wise my soule, follow the knowledge of Saluation and Wisdom of Saintes, which consisteth in fearing God & keeping his Commaundements; Delight more in prayer, then in Disputatiō; and in edifying *Charity*, then in proud knowledge. For that is the way which leadeth vnto life *Eternall*, where we little ones shal be made equall with *Angells* which alwayes see the face of their Father which is in Heauen.

There is also a third-thing wherein *Mans* soule is not a

Luk, 20  
Mat. 18

little lesse, but much lesse then  
*Angells*, to witt, in the pow-  
 er and commaund ouer Bo-  
 dyes. For *Mans* soule mo-  
 ueth the body by commaund-  
 ment of the *Will*: but other  
 Bodyes it cannot so moue:  
 And it moueth the body by  
 Progressiue motion vpon the  
 Earth: but cannot suspend  
 it vpon the Water, cleuate it  
 aboute the Ayer, or carry it  
 whether it will: But *Angells*  
 onely by *Force of Spirit*, and  
 commaundment of *Will*, e-  
 leuate heauy bodyes, and  
 carry them whether they list.  
 So an *Angell* tooke vp *Aba-*  
*chne*, and in a very short time  
 carried him to *Babylon* to  
 bring *Daniel* his dinner, & re-  
 carried him again to *Palatme*.

Dan. 14

A man also cannot fight in spirit onely with his enemies, but with his handes and weapons: but an Angel by power of spirit, without hands or weapons can encounter and overcome a whole army of men. So one Angel slew at once a hundred, fourescore and five thousand Assyrians. And if Angels can do these thinges, what can the Lord and maker of Angels doe? He truly made all thinges of nothing, and can reduce all thinges to nothing.

4 Reg. 19

Mans soule moreouer can by the art of paynting with industry and labour make the image of a man so lively that it may seeme

seeme to liue and breath : But  
an Angell can without labour  
of handes or instruments, al-  
most in a moment of time as-  
sume in such sort a body Ele-  
mentarie, that wise men will  
iudge it to be the true body  
of a man, because it can walk,  
speake, eate, drinke, be tou-  
ched, handled and washed.  
Gen. 18 So *Abraham* prepared meate  
for the Angells, and washt  
their feete: For as the Apostle  
Ieb. 13 declareth : *Here ceaued An-  
gels to harbour* thinking they  
had bene men. Which also  
happened to his nephew *Loth*,  
when he receaued two An-  
gels as strangers into his  
Gen. 19 house. The Angell *Raphael*  
in like manner remayned with  
young *Tobias* many dayes  
walking,

walking, speaking, eating, and drinking as if he had bene a man indeede: yet notwithstanding being after to depart he said : *I seemed indeede to eat with you, and to drinke; but I vse an innu sible meate and drinke,* and sodainly he vanished from their sight.

Tob. 12

Surely it is admirable, and proceedeth from great power, so to frame a body on the sodaine as that it may seeme to differ in nothing from *ſ* living body of a Man; and againe at pleasure on the sodaine so to dissolue the same body that nothing thereof remayne. If then the power of Angels be so great, how great is the power of the maker of Angels who gaue them

them that power? Truly as the knowledge of Angells and men, being compared with the knowledge of God is ignorance: and as the iustice of Angells and men, being compared with the iustice of God is iniustice: so the power of Angells and men being compared with the power of God is infirmitie. Therefore it is truly said: *Our God onely wise, onely good, and onely mightie.*

Rom. 16  
Iuke 18  
1 Tim. 6  
Cap 4.

Heb. 2

Lastly, if we consider the place of Angels and of men; we shall finde mans soule in that respect also, *Not a little lesse, but much lessened under Angells* (I willingly vse that word which the Apostle vs-eth, For God hath appointed a place

a place on earth for the soule of man : and in heaven to wit in his Pallace a place for Angels. *For the heauen of heauen is to our Lord : but the earth he hath giuen to the children of men.*

Mal. 1 13

Whereupon our Lord in St. *Mathew* calleth them *The Angels of heauen.* And in St. *Luke* he saith : *There shall be ioy in heauen vpon one sinner that doth penance,* And a little after : *There shall be ioy before the Angels of God, vpon one sinner that doth penance.* God also hath so tyed the soule to the body, that it cannot without it remoue from place to place : but Angels are not tyed to any body : but haue power giuen them to passe from

Math, 24

Luke 15

from heauen to earth, and from earth to heauen or whether soeuer they will with very great speede; so that Angels being next vnto God in dignitie of Nature; doe also in some sort by their celerity, immitate his vbiquitie. For God is euery where by immensitie of Nature, and therefore needeth no change of place: Angels by swiftnesse of motion passe so speedily from place to place, and so exhibit their presence in euery place, that they seeme after a sort to be euery where.

But my soule if thou wilt heare the Lord of Angels; there is no cause why thou shouldest enuy that Angels haue so high a place and so vnfatigab'e



vnfatigable a motion : For  
not onely thou my soule,  
when thou art loosed from  
the body, shalt be equall vn-  
to Angels : but when thou  
shalt returne vnto thy body  
which Christ *will configure to*  
*the body of his glory* : with  
that body shalt thou possesse  
heauen as thy owne-house, &  
it being made spirituall shall  
without labour or wearinesse  
be presently there where-  
soeuer thou (the soule) shalt  
will and command it. Thy  
Lord doth not deceaue thee,  
who saith in his Gospel : *In*  
*my Fathers house there be many*  
*Mansions.* And, *I goe and pre-*  
*pare you a place.* And, *If I go*  
*and prepare you a place: I come*  
*agaime, and will take you to my*  
*selfe,*

Phil. 3

1 Cor. 5

Ioh. 14

Ioh. 17

ch. 10  
Luk. 24

selfe. that where I am, you also  
may be. Father I will that  
where I am, they also may be with  
me, and that they may see my  
glory which thou hast given me.  
But thou art not ignorant  
where Christ is, and what bo-  
dy he hath. For thou dost  
confesse every day and say:  
*On the third day he rose againe  
from the dead, he ascended into  
heaven; thou knowest also  
that his body after the resur-  
rection did sometimes enter  
in among his Disciples the  
dores being shut, and depar-  
ted from them not walking but  
vanishing; that is, he trans-  
ferred his body from them so  
speedily as if it had beene a  
Spirit and not a body. But  
if thou seeke after this glory;  
thou*

thou must first *Configure thy body, to the body of the humilitie of Christ*, And then *Christ will configure thy body to the body of his glory.* For *Christ suffered for vs, leauing vs an example that we may follow his* Stepps saith *St. Peter the Apostle.* And what are his Stepps? *Who (saith he) did no swar,* neither was guile found in his mouth: *Who when he was reuiled, did not reuyle, when he suffered he threatned not.* There are two Stepps of Christ, which if thou tread not, thou shalt loose thy way to heauen. First doe not but suffer euil: Seconclly, Doe good, and here expect no good. Or (which is the summe of all) *Loue thy neighbour for Gods*

Phil. 3

1 Pet. 2

Gods sake, not for reward of man : and for friendship, not for lust.

Cap. 5

De Ciu,  
lib, 12  
c, 9/

Let vs now come to the dignitie of Angells according to Grace. Truly in this also Man is lessened more then a little lesse then Angels. For God so created Angels in the beginning, that at the same instant he made their Nature, and infused in them grace, as *St. Augustine* witnesseth in his bookes of the Cittie of God. And then so soone as by the first conuersion of their mindes to God, they adhered to him by loue (the reprobate Angels falling) they were crowned with beatitude and glory. Therefore their Pilgrimage was very short; but their

their Mansion in heaven eternall : If yet, that short space, which passed betwene their creation and beatitude, may be called a Pilgrimage. But we in our creation receaued grace with our nature in our first parent, and not in our selues : therefore by his fall we al fell. In whom (as the Apostle speaketh *Rom. 5.*) *all sinned.* For although by the Mediator of God and men Christ Iesus, we are reconciled to God; yet we are condemned to continual banishment, and whiles we are in body, we are Pilgrims from our Lord *For we walke by faith and not by sight.* And it much afflicteth pious men and such as sigh after heauen, that we are here

2 Cor, 5

Psal. 119

heere conuersant among our  
ctuell enemies, where there is  
danger, lest being circumuen-  
ted and taken by them, we be  
at length excluded from the  
possession of our most sweete  
country. Hence proceeded  
these wordes : *Woe is me that  
my sojournings are prolonged : I  
haue dwelt with the inhabitants  
of Cedar ; my soule hath bene  
long a sojourner.* But although  
in this we are lesse then Angels:  
yet Gods mercy doth greatly  
comfort vs ; for that it hath  
pleased him of our kinde to  
exalt Christ aboue all the An-  
gels of heauen, as also his  
Blessed Mother. Many men  
likewise being inferior to An-  
gels in the gifts of Nature,  
haue surmounted some of  
them

them in the guiftes of grace  
and equalled the Higheft.

Truely *St. Iohn Chryftome*  
expounding the Epiftle to the  
*Romans*, doubteth not to  
place the chiefe Apostles *Pe-*  
*ter* and *Paul* whereas the *Se-*  
*raphims* doe flye and gloryfie  
God. Which alfo is pious to  
belceue of *St. Iohn baptift* and  
others.

Hom, 32

Adde moreouer, that as the  
good Angels after their firft  
merit entred into glory, fo  
the euill Angels after their  
firft finne, were condemned  
to perpetuall punifhment.  
Men ought not therefore to  
complaine of a longer fpace,  
fince they may therein often  
mend, and by repentance  
procure pardon for their  
P offences.

office.

Cap. 6

It now remaineth that we speake somewhat of the offices of Angels. Angels haue five Offices. The first is alwayes with Hymnes and songes to praye their maker. And that we may vnderstand how much God esteemeth this ministerie, we must consider that the highest Angels are appointed for this Office; who being as it were, the first fingers in that Quire, all the other Orders of Angels follow with incredible exultation.

Isay. 6

Heare what the Prophet Isay saith: *I sawe our Lord sitting vpon a high throne & elevated, & those things that were vnder him, filled the Temple Seraphims*



Seraphins stood upon the same :  
Six wings to one, & six winges to  
the other, with two they couered  
his face, and with two they coue-  
red his feete, and with two they  
flew. And they cryed one to an  
other, and said : Holy, holy,  
holy, the Lord God of hostes, all  
the earth is full of his glory.  
Heere thou hearest the name  
Seraphin, which are the  
Chiefe of the Higheest Order:  
Thou seest them couer his  
face and feete in signe of re-  
uerence, as if they durst not  
behold his face or touch his  
bare feete : Thou seest they  
fly continually whiles they  
sing : which signifieth their  
desire to approach still nearer  
vnto God : which two things  
are needfull for those who

Psal. 2

desire to please God; that while they sing his prayſes, they loue him with reuerence and reuerence him with loue. This the Prophet *Daniell* declareth ſaying: *Serue our Lord in feare; and reioyce to him with trembling.* From hence thou mayſt learne my ſoule with what veneration God is to be ſerued, ſince the chiefe Angels in heauen which alwayes behold his face, dare not (notwithſtanding their highe eſtate and long familiaritie) but reuerently feare him whiles they prayſe him. And what wilt thou Duſt and Aſhes anſwere at the day of iudgement, when thou ſhalt be reprehended for thy drowſineſſe and diſtractions in a worke

worke so diuine that thou wast not worthy to be imployed therein? Learne therefore from henceforth (being taught by such a President) to prayse thy God with feare, reuerence, atention, vigilancye and loue.

An other Office of Angels is to offer vp the prayers of men to God; And to commend them also by their suffrage: For so speaketh the Angel *Raphael* in the booke of *Tobias* When thou didst pray with teares, and didst bury the dead, and left thy dinner, I offered thy prayer to our Lord. And in the *Apocalips* *Iohn* sawe an Angel standing before the Altar with a golden Censer: And

*Tob, 12*

*Apoc, 8*

P 3

there

ther were (saith he) given to him many incenses, that he should giue of the prayers of all saintes vpon the Altar of golde, which is before the throne of God.

And in this truely the great mercy of God doth also appeare. For he was not content, first by his Prophets and after by his sonne and his Apostles to exhort vs to pray: but also promised to giue whatsoeuer we should aske:

Luk. 11 *Aske (saith he) and it shall be giuen you.* And in an other

Ioh. 15 *place: If you shall aske my Father any thing in my name, he will giue it you.* And beside

Math. 7 *this promise he also added A reward to those that aske:*

*But thou (saith he) when thou shalt*

shalt pray, enter into thy Chamber, and hauing shut the dore, pray to thy Father in secret: and thy Father which seeth thee in secret, will repay thee. to wit a reward, beside the thinges which thou didst aske. For so our Lord speaketh in that place, of prayer and *Aimes-deedes* saying : *Thy Father which seeth in secret will repay thee.*

Neither is God content with this demonstration of fatherly loue : But hath appointed the Angels as masters of Requestes to take charge of the prayers and petitions of the poore, and to present and reade them in his sight, that no one of their Petitions may be forgotten. What Prince

Prince in the world did ever promise rewardes to those that came to demand of him mercy or iustice? And yet those which come to the Princes of the World are men and the Princes themselves also are men made of the same molde, and subiect to the same Almighty God. But albeit it may seeme much to reward those that aske: yet ought it not seeme much to giue them free access, to appoint faithfull masters of Requestes to keepe their petitions, and to offer them vp and sollicite their speedy dispatch.

The third Office of Angels is to be sent as Ambassadors to denounce such thinges as  
God

God will haue denounced,  
 especiall concerning our  
 Redemption and saluation.  
 So speaketh the Apostle to  
 the Hebrewes : *Are not all*  
 ( the Angels ) *ministring*  
*Spirits : Sent to minister for*  
*them which shall receaue the*  
*inheritance of saluation.*

Heb. 1

We reade also in many  
 places of the olde Testa-  
 ment, how Angels appeared  
 to the Patriarches and Pro-  
 phets , and manifested to  
 them such thinges as God  
 would haue manifested. We  
 finde likewise in the new Te-  
 stament that the Angel *Gabriel*  
 was sent as an Ambassador  
 from God to *Zacharie* and to  
 the virgin Mother of God.  
 Angels also were sent to the  
 P 5 shepheards,

Gen, 18

Dan, 9

Luke 1

Luk, 2

Ioh, 20

Math 28  
Act, 1

shepherds, to St. *Ioseph*, and after the Resurrection of our Lord to the women that staid at the Sepulcher, and after the Ascension, to all the Disciples. But if any aske, why God (who is euey where, and can easily by himselfe speake in the hearts of men) sendeth notwithstanding his Angels? I answer, because men may vnderstand that God regardeth their affaires, and that all thinges are gouerned and ordered by him. For otherwise they might perswade themse'ues that Gods inspirations did proceede from their owne discourse and counsaile: But when they see or heare that Angels are sent by God,  
and



and the thinges which the Angels foretold, to come so truly to passe; they cannot doubt but that God foreseeeth mans affayres, & doth cheise-ly direct and dispose such thinges as appertaine to the saluation of his Elect.

The fourth Office of Angells is to protect men both in particular and ingenerall. For it pleased the mercy of God to commend vnto his strongest seruants the custodie of the weaker. And to appoint them as Tutors ouer Children, Gardians ouer Infantes, Patrons ouer Clyents, shepherdes ouer sheepe, Physicians ouer sicke folkes, Defendors ouer Orphans, and

and such as cannot defend themselves but vnder the winges of the more mighty.

Of the protection of particular men *David* witnesseth:

*Psal, 90*

*He hath giuen his Angels charge of thee, that they keepe thee in all thy wayes.* And

Christ himselfe is also a faithfull witness heereof :

*Math, 18*

*See (saith he) that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say to you, that their Angels in heauen alwayes doe see the face of my Father which is in heauen.* Touching their protection also of Prouinces and

*Dan, 10*

kingdomes *Daniel* witnesseth : Who calleth the Gardian Angel of the kingdom of Persia, the king of Persia, and the Gardian Angell

Angell of the Kingdome of Greece, the King of Greece, And the Gardian Angell of the Children of *Israell*, he calleth by his name *Michaell*. Saint *Iohn* likewise in the *Apocalips* writeth of the Angells *Gardians* of Churches and maketh mention Of the Angell of the Church of *Ephesus*, of *Smyrna*, and of others.

*Apcc. 2*

Therefore in euery Kingdome, there are two Kinges; the one a visible Man, the other an inuisible Angell: And in euery Church there are two Bishops; the one a visible man, the other an inuisible Angell: And in the vniuersal Catholique Church there are two chiefe Pastors appointed vnder Christ our Lord

Lord, the one a visible man, the other an invisible Angell, which wee beleue to be St. *Michael* the Archangell. For as the Synagogue of the *Jewes* in times past : So now the Church of the Christians, doth reuerence him for her Patron.

Dost thou not see my soule, how carefull that Maiesty ( who needeth nothing of ours ) is of vs his poore seruantes ? What could he doe more to manifest his great loue then hee hath done ? He hath loaded vs with Benefites, to make vs to stay willingly with him : He hath guarded vs with a Watch, that we should not Fly from him, and he hath appointed  
ouer

ouer vs Protectors, least wee should be carried from him? What would he doe, if wee were his *Treasure*, as indeed he is our *only Treasure*.

Therefore my soule yeild at last to his Loue, and being overcome therewith; Man-  
cipate and giue thy selfe who-  
ly by an irreuocable vow vn-  
to his seruice: Let not things  
which are seene moue thee:  
but thinke of and sigh after  
the things thou seest not:  
*For the things that be seene are*  
*Temporall: but those that be*  
*not seene are Eternall.*

2 Cor. 4

The fift, and last Office of  
Angells, is to be as armed  
Captaines or Soldiours to  
work *Revenge* vpon Nations  
and Correction among the  
people

Gen, 19 people. They were Angells  
which burned the Infamous  
Cittyes, with fire and brim-  
stone. Which kild the First  
Exod. 12 begotten throughout all E-  
gypt. Which at one Assault  
4 Reg. 19 destroyed many thousand *As-  
sirians*. And they shall be  
Angells which at the day of  
Mat. 13 Iudgement, *Shall seperate the  
euill from among the iust, and  
shall cast them into the Furnace  
of Fire.*

Let good men therefore  
loue the hoily Angells as their  
Country-men : And let wic-  
ked men dread their power,  
which are the Executioners  
of Almighty Gods wrath,  
from whose handes  
none  
can deliuer them.

THE

THE TENTH STEPP,

*From the Consideration of Gods  
essence, by the similitude  
of a Corporall  
quantity.*

**W**E haue ascended Cap. I.  
by created sustan-  
ces as high as we  
can : And yet we  
are not come to knowe God  
so perfectly, as by Speculati-  
on euen in this *Vayle of teares*  
hee may be knowne. It re-  
maineth then that we consi-  
der it by the *Dimensions* of a  
Corporall quantity, which  
we know ; we may ascend  
vnto the *Breadth, Length,*  
*Height, and Depth* of Gods  
inuisible

Psal 47

inuisible essence. For among  
 Creatures, those are said to  
 be great, which haue foure  
 great Dimensions. And God  
 in the *Psalmes*, and in many  
 other places, is said *To be*  
*Great, and his greatnesse with-*  
*out end.* Truly St. Bernard  
 (a man excelling in contem-  
 plation) in his bookes of  
 Consideration which he writ  
 to Pope *Eugenius*, framed  
 from these Dimensions cer-  
 taine *steppes* to knowe God:  
 Yet was hee not the first In-  
 uentor of a *Ladder* of this  
 kinde: but hee learned this  
 manner of *Ascension*, from  
 the Apostle who was rapt in-  
 to the third Heauen. For so  
 speaketh the Apostle in his  
 Epistle to the *Ephesians*:  
*That*



Ephe, 3

That you may be able to comprehend with all the Saintes, what is the Breadth, and Length and Height, and Depth. For if any one consider attentively, he shall finde indeed, that there is nothing without God sound and substantiall : But all is small, short, base, vaine and superficiall : But in God *His immensity* is true breadth : his *Eternity* is true length : his *Omnipotency* is true height : and his *Incomprehensibility* is true depth.

But for him that desireth to Ascend, and to finde what he seeketh : It is not enough to consider these things lightly : but he must Comprehend : That you may be able (saith the Apostle) to Comprehend

Psal 47

inuisible essence. For among Creatures, those are said to be great, which haue foure great Dimensions. And God in the *Psalmes*, and in many other places, is said *To be Great, and his greatnesse without end.* Truly St. Bernard (a man excelling in contemplation) in his bookes of Consideration which he writ to Pope *Eugenius*, framed from these Dimensions certaine *steppes* to knowe God: Yet was hee not the first Inuentor of a *Ladder* of this kinde: but hee learned this manner of *Ascension*, from the Apostle who was rapt into the third Heauen. For so speaketh the Apostle in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*:  
*That*

Ephe, 3

That you may be able to comprehend with all the Saintes, what is the Breadth, and Length and Height, and Depth. For if any one consider attentively, he shall finde indeed, that there is nothing without God sound and substantiall : But all is small, short, base, vaine and superficiall : But in God *His immensity* is true breadth : his *Eternity* is true length : his *Omnipotency* is true height : and his *Incomprehensibility* is true depth.

But for him that desireth to Ascend, and to finde what he seeketh : It is not enough to consider these things lightly : but he must Comprehend : *That you may be able* (saith the Apostle) *to Comprehend*

hend with all the *Saintes*, what is the *Breadth*, and *Length*, and *Height*, and *Depth*. Hee surely (o h comprehend, who considereth attentiuely, and is so fully perswaded by the Truth, that selling all hee hath, hee maketh hast to buy the Treasure he hath found. And the Apostle added (*With all the Saintes*) because the *Saintes* onely comprehend these thinges; or for that none comprehendeth them as he ought, vntil hee become a Saint.

Neither doth St. *Augustine* contradict what wee haue said; who in his Epistle to *Honoratus* writeth, That the Apostle describeth the *Crosse* of Christ, by the breadth, length,

length, height, and depth thereof. The breadth of the Crosse, was where his handes were nayled, the length to which his body cleaued, the height where his tytle was written, and the depth was fastned and hid in the earth. I say St. *Augustine* doth not contradict our meaning but rather much confirme it: For the Crosse of Christ is the way to obtaine true breadth, length, height and depth. For although to the eyes of men, the Crosse seeme small, short, base, and of no depth: Yet the armes thereof haue bin extended from East to West, and from North to South: that is the glory thereof hath reached to the highest Heauen,

Heaven, which (like a key) it hath opened for the Elect: and hath pierced to the lowest Hell, which from the same Elect it hath shut for ever.

Cap. 2

Let vs begin from the essence, and then passe on to the *Attributes*. The Essence of God, may many wayes be said *most Broad*. First in it selfe, because it is truly *Infinite*, and comprehendeth all the perfections of Creatures, which are or may be, without end. For whatsoeuer is, shall be, Or may be, is without doubt contained in God, In a most eminent manner.

Creatures therefore are Good with an addition: As a good Man, a good Horse, a good

good House, a good Garment and the like : but God is *All good*. For when *Moses* said : *Shew me thy Glory*. God answered : *I will shew thee all Good*.

Exod., 3.

If one had a thing at home, that contained all the Sences *objects* in the highest perfection ; so that hee should neuer need to goe abroad , because he had at home as many delights in that one thing, as any sensuall man could desire; should not that thing be very precious ? And if moreover that thing contained in it selfe , such abundant wealth of all sortes, as any couetous man could wish, weare it not the more precious ? And againe, if that thing should bring

bring as much honour and dignity to the possessor thereof, as any ambitious man could imagine, would it not now seeme vnuaiewable? And further if that thing sufficed to satisfie not onely the desires of men but also of Angels (who exceed men in desires as they excell them in knowledge) what wouldest thou say? Yet notwithstanding should the goodnesse of that thing be farre inferiour to the goodnesse of God; which is so great that it sufficeth to satisfie the Infinite desire or rather Infinite capacity of God.

For God neuer goeth out of himselfe, because he hath *All good things* within himselfe:  
and



and before the world was made, he was as rich & as happy as he was afterward : for nothing was made by him, but was from euerlasting after a most eminent manner in him. Dost thou vnderstand my soule, what happinesse thou shalt enioy in heauen, if thou loue God on earth? And what happinesse thou shalt loose if thou loue him not? For then God will giue himselfe, to wit, *All good* to those that loue him, when he shall say : *Good and faithfull seruants enter into the ioy of your Lord.*

Math. 25

Cap. 3

God also is immense because he filleth all creatures. *I fill heauen and earth* saith our Lord : And, *If I shall*

Hier. 23

Isal. 126

2

ascend

Psal. 128

Heb. 1

Psal. 84

*ascend into heauen (saith Dauid) thou art there, if I descend into hell thou art present. I add also, if I shall goe aboue heauen, or vnder heauen, or out of heauen, I shall not be alone, because thou art there; neither can I be any where but in thee and by thee Which carriest all thinges by the word of thy power. Moreouer God by his immensitie not onely filleth all bodies, but also all spirits; For how else could he search the hart vnlesse he were in it? and how could he heare the Prayers of the hart, vnlesse he gaue care to them? And how could the Prophet say: I will heare what our Lord God will speake in me. vnlesse God did put his mouth*

mouth to the eares of the hart? Happy therefore is that soule which loueth God: there God dwelleth: *For he that abydeth in Charitie, abydeth in God, and God in him.*

1 Ioh. 4

Neither, doth God fill all things with his presence onely, but also with his glory. For the Seraphins cry: *That the earth is ful of his glory.* And David addeth: *O Lord, our Lord, how merueylous is thy name in the whole earth? Because thy magnificence is eleuated aboue the heauens.* as if he should say: Thy name, fame, and glory hath not onely filled all the earth with admiration: but also hath ascended and is eleuated aboue the heauens. *Ecclesiasticus* saith

Isay, 6

Pal, 8

Q 2 likewise:

Eccle, 4<sup>2</sup>Psal, 14<sup>8</sup>Dan, 3<sup>5</sup>

likewise: *Full of the glory of our Lord is his worke.* For there is no creature in heaven or on earth; but continually prayseth God. For which cause, *David* in the Psalmes, and the three Children in *Daniel* doe inuite all creatures to prayse and magnifie their maker: albeit they were not ignorant, many creatures to be of such a nature that they could not heare what they sayd: but because they knew that all Gods workes were good, and with their beautie therefore prayed their maker; they reioyced in them, and exhorted them to doe as they did.

And truely whosoever hath inward eyes may see that

that all Gods workes are as  
Censcets sending vp an odour  
of the sweetnesse of his glo-  
ry. And who so hath  
inward eares, may heare them  
(as it were a consort of  
all kinde of Muscicall in-  
struments) praysing God and  
saying: *He made vs, and not*  
*we our selues.* For although  
there are of the wicked  
which curse and blaspheme  
the name of God: yet they  
also are enforced euen a-  
gainst their wills to prayse  
God, as the worke doth the  
Worke-man: because in  
them likewise Gods power  
doth merueylously appeare  
whereby he made them, his  
goodnesse whereby he preser-  
ueth them his mercy whereby  
he

psal. 99

he expecteth and inuiteth them to repentance, And his iustice whereby he condemneth them to punishment.

There are many truly in the world, which heare not these voyces of Creatures, albeit they cry without ceasing : but there are innumerable Angels and holy men which heare them, and are delighted therewith ; and they also with Hymnes and songes continually prayse their maker. But to proceed.

Cap. 4

The length of Gods essence is his eternitie, which neither hath beginning of duration, nor euer shall haue end ; but is alwayes the same without any change. *Thou art* Psal, 101 *(saith David) the selfesame, and*

and thy yeares shall not fayle.  
 Tobias also, and after him the  
 Apostle calleth God ; *The*  
*king of worlds*, because he one-  
 ly was before all worlds & is  
 not subiect to worldes; but  
 ruleth and gouerneth them.  
 Other things haue begin-  
 ning and end, and neuer con-  
 tinue in the same state : Or  
 els they haue beginning with-  
 out end or change of sub-  
 stance; yet if their maker  
 please, they may cease to be.  
 Eternitie therfore is proper to  
 God onely : Nor was there  
 euer any Prince so prowde,  
 that among his many other  
 Tytles, durst arrogate to him-  
 selfe the tytle of eternall, ex-  
 cept perhaps in an other sēce:  
 As *Constantins*, who was

Tob, 13  
 1 Tim. 6

called eternal Emperour, because he was not Emperour for a certaine time, but for terme of life.

But thou my soule, mayst be numbred among both kindes of Creatures; For thou hast a body which began to be when it was conceived and borne; and by degrees it grew to that stature which God appointed; then it began to decrease; and shortly by death it shall cease to be. Therefore it neuer wholly continueth in the same state, but is every hower subject to change. Of thy body the Prophet spake this sentence, resembling it to Hay : *In the morning as an*  
*earbe*



Psal, 89

herbe hee shall passe, in the morning he shall flourish and passe : in the evening he shall fall, be hardened and withered. For in the morning, to wit, in Childhood, Mans body flourisheth like an herbe, and soone after followeth youth : In the Noone-tyde of youth, it flourisheth, and soone after followeth olde age : in the evening of olde age it falleth by death, and in the graue it is hardened, withered, and turned to dust.

Beholde therefore O my soule how farre thy bodie is from eternitie : But thou wast created in time, where as before thou wast

nothing; and therein thou art faire vnlike thy eternall Creator: but being created, thy duration is endlesse, wherein thou dost resemble thy Creator. And because whiles thou art in the body, thou changeest often from vice to vertue, and from vertue to vice: And according to the state in which thou shalt be found at thy departure from the body, thou shalt be iudged either to raigne for euer with God; or for euer to be tormented with the Deuill: therefore thou oughtest to haue a very great care to eschew vice, and to follow vertue. Take heede then least thou be seduced by the  
the

the allurements of thy flesh,  
to the euerlasting perdition  
both of thy selfe and it : but  
rather *Crucifie it, with the vices  
and concupiscences thereof;*  
that thou mayst hereafter  
liue eternally, and thy flesh  
may rise in glory, and  
in glory remaine with thee  
for all eternitie. But al-  
though the Angells and  
soules of Saintes, are to  
be partakers of eternitie in  
that high and happy *Vnion*  
with God, by his *beatifying  
vision* and loue, which vni-  
on shall continue for euer  
without change: yet may they  
alter & change their thoughts,  
affections, and places after di-  
uers manners; therefore they  
shall alwaies reuerently admire  
Gods

Gal, 5

Gods eternitie aboue them; in whom can be no change of thought, affection, or place: for he wanteth nothing, but hath all things present, which in eternitie of time, he might by diuers changings haue procured. Therefore eternitie is a length without end, no lesse proper to God then the breadth of his immensitie.

Cap. 5

Psal, 81

It followeth then, that we consider the Height of God, of whom it is sayd: *Thou onely the Highest.* For God is most heigh in excellencie of Nature. Other thinges are the more heigh and excellent, the more pure they are, and more free from matter. This is euident first in corporall things: For

For the Water is higher then the Earth, because it is more pure, and for the same cause, the Ayer is higher, then the Water, and the Fire then the Ayer, and the Heauen then the Fire.

The like also wee finde in Spirituall thinges; for the vnderstanding is higher then the sence; because the sence hath a Corporal organ, which the vnderstanding needeth not. Likewise the vnderstanding of Angels, is higher then mans: Because Mans vnderstanding needeth the helpe of Imagination and Phantasie; which Angells need not: and among Angells, they are the Highest, which vnderstand most by fewest Formes.

God

God therefore who is *A pure Act*, needeth neither Organ, nor Imagination, nor Forme, nor the presence of any Object without himselfe; for his essence is to him all things: Neither can he haue any thing, which he hath not alwayes actually had; and to haue Alwayes actually, is alwayes to be a Pure and simple Act: Therefore the Nature of God is most high, and which cannot by any meanes haue an equall. For which cause he who said: *I will be like to the Highest*; was suddainly cast downe from Heauen into the lowest Hell, as *Esay* doth describe. And Christ our Lord saith of him: *I saw Satban as a lightning fall*

*Isay 14*

*Luke 10*

*fall from Heauen.*

God also is *most High*, for that he is the first and Highest efficient, exemplar and finall cause of all thinges. He is the highest efficient cause, for that there is no Creature which hath any working vertue but from God : but God receiueth not from any other.

Againe, no cause can worke vnlesse it be moued by God : but God is moued by no other. Moreouer among Creatures such causes are said to be highest, whiah are vniuersall, and of whom particular causes depend ; As the Heauens , and Angells which moue the Heauens : but God made both the Heauens and Angells. He therefore is  
the

the first and highest efficient cause. And hee is the first exemplar cause : for he made all thinges according to the *Ideas* or *Formes*, which in him selfe he hath.

Pro. 16

Lastly, hee is also the first Finall cause ; *For hee created all thinges for himselfe* , to witt for manifestation of his glory, as the wise man saith in the *Proverbes*.

Isay, 6

Moreover, God is most high, because he sitteth in a most high Throne. *I saw our Lord* (saith *Isay*) *sitting upon an high Throne and elevated*. A seate hath two v-  
ses, the one to Iudge, the other to rest in ; let vs then consider each of them apart.

First, God hath a most high



Throne, because hee is the Highest Iudge. For *Abraham* said vnto God : *Thou doest iudge all the Earth.* And *Dauid* : *In the middes hee iudgeth goddes,* That is, God iudgeth the Iudges themselves, who in the Scripture are called Goddes. And *St. Iames* saith plainly : *There is one Law-maker and Iudge.* That is to say, God onely is the true Law-maker and Iudge : For he onely giueth Lawes to all, and receiueth them of none : iudgeth all, and is iudged of none. Moreouer, God is not onely a Iudge ; but also a King : And therefore hee iudgeth not like a Iudge appointed by a King ; but as the highest cōmanding King.

Gen. 18

Psal. 81

Iam. 4

For

Apoc, 19

Isa 94

psal, 75

For which cause hee is called the *King of Kinges*, And, *A great King above all Godds*, And terrible to the *Kinges of the earth*, Because hee transferreth Kingdomes and Em-pyres from one Nation vnto another, and *Takes away the spirit of Princes* when hee pleaseth.

Neither is God the Highest King and Iudge onely: but also an *Absolute Lord*, which is his highest tytle of all.

For Kinges are not such absolute Lordes ouer their Subiectes, as that they may when they please, deprive them of their goods and liues.

Whereof King *Achab* can be a witnesse, who would haue had *Naboths* vineyard: yet

3 Reg, 21

yet could not but by the treachery and calumnies of his wife : For which cause they both miserably perished : But God is an Absolute Lord whom all things doe serue, and yet he serueth none : and he can ( if he so please ) reduce all things to Nothing, because hee made them all of Nothing.

Thinke therefore my soule, what great feare and reuerence wee wormes of the Earth owe vnto him, that sitteth vpon the *Highest Throne*. If I be the Lord ( saith he by *ſ* Prophet *Malachie* ) where is my Feare ? And if the Highest Angells of Heauen serue him with feare and trembling, what ought we fraile mortall men

Mal, i

Isay, 66

Psal, 12

men to doe, who dwell on the earth with beastes? But to some it may seeme strange why God who is most high, loueth not creatures y<sup>e</sup> therein resemble him; to witte the high and loftie: but the humble and poore: For so speaketh God by *Isay*: *To whom shall I haue respect, but to the poore little one, and the contrite of Spirit, and him that trembleth at my wordes?* And *David*: *Our Lord is high, and be beholdeth the lowe thinges.* Yes surely God loueth high and lofty Creatures if therein they resemble him: But then they must be high in Deede, and not in appearance. God therefore loueth not the Proude which are elate and puffed vp:  
not

not truly high. But hee lo-  
ueth the humble, and such as  
tremble at his wordes, and  
exalteth them; And they are  
high indeed whome he exal-  
teth. Those therefore that  
are humble: are High: To  
witt humble in their owne  
eyes, and high in the eyes of  
God. —

If one had seene (not one-  
ly with his bodily but also  
with his mentall eyes illumi-  
nated by God) the rich  
Glutton cloathed in purple,  
sitting at his table furnished  
with all kindes of costly  
meates, attended with many  
seruantes diligently doing  
their offices: And at the  
same time had likewise be-  
held poore *Lazarus*, halfe  
naked

Luk. 16

naked and full of sores, sitting at the rich mans gate, and begging to be filled with the crummes that fell from his table : He truly should haue seene the rich man whom the world accompted most happy ; to be in the eyes of God and his Angells, as vile and abhominable as the dung and dirt of the earth : *For that which is high to men, is abomination before God*, saith our Lord in the same place, where he describeth the rich Glutton.

But on the other side he should haue seene the poore deiected *Lazarus*, to be esteemed and enobled in the eyes of God and his Angells as a precious margarite which in the end proued true : For

*Lazarus*

*Lazarus* ( as the beloued of God ) was carryed by the handes of Angells into *Abrahams* bosome : And the rich man ( as hatefull to God ) was dragged by the Deuills into the Hell of Fire.

But why speake I of *Lazarus* ? There is none higher with God, then our Lord *Iesus* Christ, euen according to his humanity : And yet neither in Heauen or Earth, is there any to be found more humble then hee. So that he said most truely : *Learn of me because I am mecke and humble.* For as that most holy soule, doth knowe more perfectly then all other, the infinite height of the Diuinitie: So it doth more perfectly know

Math. II

know the basenesse of a Creature which is made of nothing : And therefore (being also it selfe a Creature) it is most humbled and subiected to God, and by him exalted aboue all Creatures.

The like we may also say of blessed Angells and soules of holy men. For there are none more humble then those which possesse the highest places in Heauen : Because they being more neere to God ; doe more clearly see how great the difference is betweene the greatnessse of the Creator, and smalnesse of the Creature.

Therefore my soule loue humility, if thou desire true glory.

*Imitate*



Immitate the Lambe without spott, Immitate his virgin mother, immitate the Cherubins and Seraphins : all which the higher they are, the more humble also they are.

Neither hath God onely a most high Throne, because he iudgeth all : but also because he resteth more then all, and maketh them to rest vpon whom he sitteth. Gods most high Throne is his most high rest : For although he gouerneth the whole world in which are continuall conflicts and warrs of elements, beasts and men : yet he iudgeth with tranquillitie (as it is said in the booke of Wisdome) and alwayes enioyeth most high rest. Neither can any thing

Cap. 7.

Wisd. 1:

R trouble

Pfal, 79  
& 98

trouble his quietnesse, and the contemplation of himselfe, wherein he taketh *eternall delight*. Therefore he is called the king of Ierusalem, which is to say, the *vision of peace*. But his peculiar Throne is vpon the blessed Angells: therefore it is said : *He that sitteth vpon the Cherubins*: For God is said to sit rather vpon the Cherubins then vpon the Seraphins; For the Cherubins signifie multiplicitie of knowledge; and the Seraphins heate of loue: And rest followeth Wisdome: but care and anxietie followeth loue vnlesse it be accompanied with Wisdome. Therefore the soule of a righteous man is also called *The seate of Wisdome*.

*Wisdom.* Moreover when  
*Isay* saith: *Heauen is my seate,*  
 And when *Dauid* saith: *The*  
*heauen of heauen is to our Lord:*  
 by the heauen of heauen is  
 vnderstood the spirituall hea-  
 uens which dwell vpon the  
 corporall heauens, to wit, the  
 blessed Angells as *St. Augu-*  
*stine* saith in his exposition of  
 the hundred and thirtieth  
 Psalme. And these heauens  
 God maketh to rest so admi-  
 rably: that it is a peace which  
 passeth all vnderstanding. *St.*  
*Bernard* in one of his Sermons  
 vpon the Canticles; setteth  
 downe a very fit similitude to  
 declare this rest in these  
 wordes: *Tranquillus Deus*  
*tranquillat omnia, &c.* God be-  
 ing quiet, quieteth all things,

*Isay* 66

*Psal,* 113

*Ser.* 23

and to behold his quietnesse, is to rest. We see a king after dayly suites of causes heard before him; to dismisse the company, to auoyde the troubles of the Court, and to goe at night into his priuy Chamber with a few whom he familiarly loueth: thinking himselfe the more sure, the more secret he is: and being the more pleasant, the more quietly he beholdeth those few whome he loueth. Thus he. Whereby he plainly declareth that God sheweth himselfe vnto blessed soules not as a iudging Lord; but as a familiar friend. And truely the familiaritie which God also sheweth in this life to pure and chaste mindes is vncredible. For of him it is sayd:

*My*

*My delights to be with the children of men. And his talke is with the simple.*

Prou. 8

Prou. 3

Hence was it, that all the Saintes (albeit they suffered pressures in the world) had notwithstanding peace in their harts where God dwelt: therefore they seemed, and were indeed alwayes ioyfull and quiet. For to them the Truth said: *Your hurt shall reioyce and your ioy no man shall take from you.*

Ioh. 16

There remaineth the fourth part of dimension which is called *depth*. The depth of Gods essence is manifold. First the Diuinitie is in it selfe most deepe, solide, and substantiall: Not like a gilded wedge, which hath gold one-

Cap. 8

ly in the outside, and within is brasse or wood: but like an endlesse wedge of gold: or rather like a mine of golde so deepe that by digging it can neuer be emptied. So is God vncomprehensible: For as a Myne of gold without botome can neuer be emptied with digging: so God, (whose greatnesse is without end) can neuer be so perfectly knowne by any Creature, but that there still remayneth more to be known: and God onely comprehendeth that depth; who onely hath an infinite vnderstanding. Depth also belongeth to God in respect of place. For as he is most high and above all: So he is most deep and vnder all.

When

Who (as the Apostle saith) *Carrieth all things by the word of his power.* God therefore is as the foundation and roote of a house, *In whom we line and moue and be.* So that Salomon sayd most truely: *Heauen and the heauens of heauens cannot containe thee.* For God rather containeth the heauens and all thinges vnder them: because he is both aboue the heauens, and vnder the earth. Furthermore Gods depth is his Inuisibilitie. For God is Light: but vnaccessible: he is truth: but most secret. *Thou hast put darkenesse thy Couert* (saith Dauid) And, *verily he is God hidde* (as Isay speaketh.) St. Augustine seeing God on a time, sent his

Heb. 1

Act. 17

Reg. 8.

psal. 17

Isay. 45

Lib. 9 c. 6.

c. 6.

lib. 10. c.

6. &amp; in

psal. 26. &amp;

28

yes as messengers from earth to heauen; And all thinges answered; *We are not him whom thou seekest; but he made vs.* Wherefore not finding God by Ascention through outward thinges; he began to Ascend through inwrd thinges; and from them he learned that God was more easily to be found; for he knewe that the soule was better then the body: and the inward sence then the outward sence: and the vnderstanding then it. Whence he gathered: that God (who is more inward then the vnderstanding) was better then the vnderstanding. Therefore whatsoever we vnderstand or conceaue; is not God: but some



some other thing lesse then  
God : for he is better then  
we can conceaue. Goe too  
then my soule, if thou art bet-  
ter then thy body to whome  
thou giuest life ; because it is  
a body and thou a spirit : and  
if the eye of thy body cannot  
see thee , because it is with-  
out and thou within : So  
thinke likewise, that thy God  
is better then thou art : be-  
cause he is a spirit more high  
and inward then thou : For  
thou dwellest as it were with-  
out : but he resideth in his  
most profound and secret Ta-  
bernacle. But shalt thou neuer  
be admitted thether ? God  
forbid : Thy Lord doth not  
lye who saith : *Blessed are the*  
*cleane of hart, for they shall see*

Math, 5

R ; God.

1 Cor. 13

1 Ioh, 3

psal. 41

God. Nor his Apostle who sayd: *We see now by a glasse in a darke sort, but then face to face.* Nor St. Iohn the Evangelist who writ: *We knowe that when he shall appeare, we shall be like to him, because we shall see him as he is.* How great then will thy ioy be; when in that secret and sacred Sanctuary thou shalt see and enioy that light, beauty, and goodnesse it selfe? Then shall it plainly appeare how vaine, transitorie, and of small moment the goods of this earth are; wherewith men being inebriated, forget the true and euerlasting. But if thou thirst indeed after the liuing God, *And if thy teares be breades unto thee day and night whiles*

it is sayd where is thy God? Be  
not slowe to cleanse thy hart  
whereby thou mayst see God;  
Be not weary to dispose ascenti-  
on in thy hart untill the God of  
Goddess shall be seene in Syon.  
Neither waxe thou colde in  
the loue of God, and thy  
neighbour, nor loue in word  
and in tongue, but in deed and  
truth. For that is the way  
that leadeth to life  
euerlasting.

\* ✝ \*

\* \* \*

Psal, 83

1 Ioh. 3

THE

## THE ELEVENTH STEPP,

*From the Consideration of the  
greatnesse of Gods power,  
by the similitude of a  
corporall quan-  
titie.*

Cap. 1

**G**reat is our Lord, and  
there is no end of his  
Greatnesse. For he is  
not great onely be-  
cause Omnipotencie is his  
hight; infinite wisdom his  
depth; incomprehensible  
mercie his breadth; & iustice  
like a rod of yron his length;  
but also for that these Attri-  
butes are infinite in breadth,  
length, hight and depth.

And to begin from his  
Power,

Power, or rather his Omnipotency: The breath of Gods power consisteth in extention to infinite thinges.

First it is extended to all thinges made: for there is nothing from the greatest Angel to the least Worme, or from the highest Heauen to y lowest Hell, which was not made by y power of God: *All things* (saith St. Iohn) *were made by him: and without him was made nothing.* And after, *The world was made by him.*

Ioh. i

Secondly it is extended to all thinges that shalbe made. For as nothing hath bin made but by him: so likewise nothing shall be made but by him. So speaketh the Apostle: *Of him and by him, and in him are all thinges.*

Rom. i

Thirdly

Luk. 1

Math, 19

Thirdly it is extended to all things that may be made. So speaketh the Angel: *There shall not be impossible with God any worde.* And our Lord himselfe saith: *With God all things are possible.*

Fourthly, it is extended to the destruction of all things made. For as God could by a floude of Water destroy at once all men and other living creatures vpon earth, except a few, which it pleased him to preserue within *Noahs Arke*: So he can by a floude of Fire at one time destroy not onely all Men and other Creatures found living at the last day: but also all Trees, Cittyes and other things vpon Earth. *The day of our Lord* (saith Saint

Saint Peter the Apottle in his last Epistle ) *shall come as a Theefe, in the which the Heavens shall passe with great violence, but the Elements shall be resolved with heate, and the Earth and the workes which are in it shall be burnt.*

2 Pet. 3

Great surely is the breadth of Gods Power, and which none can sufficiently admire: vnlesse he could number all the Creatures which God hath made, shall make, or can make. And who is able so to doe, but hee whose knowledge is Infinite ? This Power also may seeme the greater, when wee imagine how great a thing it is, to destroy thinges made so many ages in one moment, or as

*Iudas*

Mach, 8

Exod. 15

Cap. 2

*Indas Machabaus saich : To  
destroy with one becke. Let vs  
therefore say with Moses:  
who is like to thee among the  
strong O Lord?*

The length of Gods Power  
is seene by continuall coope-  
ration with all thinges made,  
& yet neither is, nor euer shall  
be wearied. For it cannot  
be lessened, weakened, or  
decayed by any meanes; be-  
cause it is truly eternall; or  
rather the true eternity of the  
Diuinity. Some wonder  
how the Sunne, Moone and  
Starres, can mooue so long  
time with such speed from  
East to West, and returne a-  
gain to their courses without  
any intermission. And surely  
it were much to be wondred

at :



at : but that we know they  
are carried by God Almighty;  
*Who carrieth all thinges by the*  
*worde of his Power.*

Heb, 1

Others wonder how it can  
be that in Hell the fire is not  
consumed which burneth e-  
uerlastingly, nor the bodyes  
of those wretches dissolued,  
which are for euer scorched  
in those flames. And this  
may be thought not onely ad-  
mirable but also vnpossible;  
were it not that God (who  
is Almighty and Everlasting)  
causeth that fire so to burne  
that it is neuer quenched;  
and so preserveth the bodyes  
of those wretches in that fire;  
that they are alwayes tormen-  
ted and neuer consumed.

Others wonder moreouer,  
how

how God Carrieth and sustaineth all thinges , and yet is not wearied with so huge a burthen. For a strong Man, Horse , Oxe , or Elephant, can carry a great weight a little while : or a very great weight a very short while : But to carry a most great burthen an euerlasting time without wearinesse, surpasseth the strength of any Creature.

But indeed they had cause to wonder, if the Power of God were in Weight and Measure , as the power of Creatures is.

But since his power is Infinite, it is no meruaile if it can beare a great burthen an infinite time without wearinesse. Let vs say therefore

fore with the holy Prophet  
*Moses : Who is like to thee a-  
mong the strong O Lord.*

Exod. 15.

Cap. 3

The Height of Gods pow-  
er consisteth chiefly in two  
things. First in that it one-  
ly hath made *Most high things.*

Sublunary things God  
made in the first Creation:  
yet may they by Action of  
Creatures be ingendred, al-  
tered or corrupted : For the  
Elementes are in part mutu-  
ally changed, Heaibes and  
Plantes spring from the  
Earth, Beastes are bred of  
Beastes, Fishes are ingen-  
dred in the Water, cloudes  
and rayne in the Ayer, and  
Cometts in the Fire.

But the Heauens & Starres  
(which are y highest bodyes)

God

Psal, 8

God onely created, and he alone doth so preserve, that no creature hath power, to make change, alter or corrupt them.

*I shall see* (saith the Prophet) *thy Heavens, the workes of thy Fingers, the Moone and Starres which thou hast founded.* For he that is *most High*, hath kept the *highest workes* for himselfe onely; he began to frame them from their foundation, and hath brought them to their perfection.

Hee also by his Infinite power created, preserveth, and for ever will preserve, thinges Spirituall (as Angells and the soules of men) which are his noblest and highest workes from death. For Creatures haue no part in doing

doing these thinges ; neither can they (all ioyned together) Create or destroy one Angell or one soule.

Secondly the height of Gods power is seene in Miracles which as St. *Augustine* teacheth : *Are workes beside the vsuall course and order of Nature, whereat the very Angells and Nature her selfe doth wonder.* Which of the Angells did not wonder , to see the Sunne and Moone which runne their course so speedily, stand still at the commandment of *Iosue* ? And that wee may not thinke it fell out casually ( for none can imagine how a thing so vnusuall could be donne by a mortall man ) the holy Ghost saith : *Our Lord*

Tract. 24  
in Ioh.

Ios. 10

idem.

Lord obeying the voyce of a Man. For Iosue did not properly speake vnto the Sunne and Moone, which he knew could not heare his commandement : but he prayed to God; as if he should say: *Thou Sunne* (by the commandement of God) *against Gabaon moue not :* And *thou Moone,* *against the valley of Aialon.* And our Lord obeyed the voyce of a Man, That is Caused those Lights to obey the voyce of a Man. For often times in holy Scripture God is said to do those things whereof he is the Cause that they are done. As in Genesis when our Lord said to *Abraham:* *Now haue I knownen that thou fearest God:* the meaning of

Gen. 22

of those wordes is : Now  
haue I caused , that both thy  
selfe and others know that  
thou truly fearest God.

The like also was that  
worke ( signifying the height  
of Gods power ) at the  
Passion of our Lord : When  
the Moone which was very  
farre distant from the Sunne ;  
approached with vncredible  
speed vnto the Sun ; & Ecclip-  
sing it three houres , caused  
darknesse *upon the whole earth* ,  
& after with like speed ; retur-  
ned to the place from whence  
she came : All which St. De-  
nis ( in his Epistle to St. Poli-  
carpe ) doth witnes that he saw  
and obserued. And this truly  
is a wonder contrary to the for-  
mer, though no lesse strange ;  
For

Math. 27

For it is as vnusuall, and as much about the whole power of Nature, to make the moone runne her course more speedily then she is accustomed, as it is to make her stand still.

I omit the giuing sight to the blinde, the raysing of the dead, and many such like miracles, which God hath done, and doth by his Prophets, Apostles, and other his faithfull seruantes; All which doe crye, *Who is like to thee among the strong O Lord?*

But I cannot omit that cheife and greatest Miracle, which God shall shew at the day of Iudgement; when all the dead shall rise together: albeit the bodyes of many of them haue beene burned to ashes,



ashes, and scattered in the  
Wundes; or deuoured by  
beastes, and changed into o-  
ther bodies; or buried in  
fieldes and Orchards, and al-  
tered into sundry hearbes.

Which of the Angells but  
will wonder, to behold in the  
twinkling of an eye, so many  
Millions of Millions of Mil-  
lions of men, at the comman-  
dement of the Almighty, to  
take againe their bodies, al-  
beit they haue lyen hidd for  
many ages, and after diuers  
manners haue bene disperfed  
and consumed? This there-  
fore is the highth of Gods po-  
wer, in regard whereof it may  
likewise be said: *Who is like to  
thee among the strong O Lord.*

There remaineth the depth

Cap. 4

S

of

of his power, which seemeth to me to consist in the manner which God vseth in making things. For who can conceaue how something is *made of nothing*? They could not sound this depth, who held it for a certaine and approved Principle: *That of nothing, nothing is made.* And we also in this belecue what we see not: but we belecue God who cannot lye. I say we belecue that heauen and earth, and all things that are therein, were created by God, without any precedent matter whereof they were made. But how this could be done, is a thing too deepe for vs to finde out. Moreouer, God did not onely make all things of *nothing,*

nothing, but also in nothing; to wit without precedent space or place to containe them in: which is hard to vnderstand, especially in corporall things. And therefore this depth also is not to be sounded. Take away (saith St. Augustine in his Epistle to Dardanus) the distances of places from bodies, and they shall be no where, and because they shall be no where, they shall not be. If therefore, nothing was before God created heauen and earth, where did he place heauen & earth? Truly not in Nothing: And yet they are created, & placed in themselves, because he so would and could who can do all thinges, although we cannot conceaue how they are

S 2

done.

Epist. 57

Iob. 38

done. This did God himselfe signifie, when (declaring his omnipotence to holy Iob) he said: *Where wast thou when I layd the foundations of the earth? tell me if thou hast understanding, who set the measures thereof, if thou knowe? Or who stretched out the lynes vpon it? Vpon what are the foundations thereof grounded? Or who let downe the corner stone thereof?* And that we might vnderstand these workes of Gods omnipotence to be most worthy of all prayse, our Lord himselfe presently addeth: *When the morning stars praised me together, and all the sonnes of God made in-bilation:* To wit the Holy Angells which were created together

together with heauen and earth; and are as it were *spirituall starrs* so bright that they may be called *the sonnes of God*; when they sawe heauen and earth created of nothing, and placed in nothing; and yet to be most firmly founded vpon their owne stabilitie; with wonderfull admiration and iubilation, they praysed the omnipotency of their maker. Neither is it lesse profound to vnderstand, how God by the onely command of his will, did erect such huge buildinges. For we knowe that in edifices lesse without comparison, how many instruments, inginnes, and workemen *Architeckes* want. Who therefore

Gen, I  
Ioh. I

can conceaue how by Will  
onely (which neuer goeth out  
of the thing that willeth) so  
great and manyfold workes  
could be made? God sayd  
(but to himselfe for *the word of  
God is in God and is God*) He  
sayd (I say) commanding and  
expressing the commande-  
ment of his will: *Be Heauen  
made, and heauen was made:  
Be earth made, and earth was  
made: Be light made: Be a  
Sunne made: Be starrs made:  
Be Trees made: Be Beastes  
made: Be Men made: Be  
Angells made: And all things  
were made.* Add also that  
the same God can if he will  
destroy all thinges with one  
becke as we read in the books  
of *ſ Machabies*. It is likewise

2 Mach, 8

*a depth vnfoundable how God made all these great and manifold things consisting of so many partes and members in a moment? Nature and Art with vs require a long time to perfect their workes. We see hearbes are sown long before they growe: and oftentimes many yeares passe before trees take roote, extend their boughes, and bring forth fruite: Beastes likewise carry their young ones long within them: and after they feede them long also before they growe great. I will say nothing of Art; for experience sheweth, that our Artizans can bring nothing to perfection, but in a competent time.*

How great therefore is the power of God which in a moment hath brought, so great things to perfection? But I dispute not, whether God in a moment made heaven and earth, and all things therein; or whether he spent six whole dayes in the first Creation of things. For I vndertake not to cleere doubts: but to *frame Ascensions* vnto God from the consideration of things. That then which I affirme and admire, is, that euery particular thing was made in a moment by the Omnipotent Creator. For of the earth, water, ayre, and fire there is no doubt, as also of the Angells; but that they were created altogether  
in



in a moment. Of the Firmament, and diuision of waters; it is likewise certaine, that all was don by y<sup>e</sup> powerfull word onely of the speaker, saying: *Be a Firmament made amidst the waters,* & that in a momēt: For it followeth: *And it was so done.* Vpon which place St. Iohn Chrysostome saith: *He onely sayd and the worke followed.* And the same Author vpon those wordes ( *Let the earth shoote forth green hearbs And it was so done* ) sayth; *Quis non obstupescat cogitans, &c.* Who would not wonder to thinke, how at the word of our Lord, the earth should shoote forth sundry flowers, and adorne her face as it were with an admirable embroyderie? You might haue

Gen, 1

Hom, 4.  
in Gen.

Hom. 5  
in Gen.

Hom. 7

have seen the earth which before was without forme, on the sodaine to become almost as faire as the heauen. And after vpon those wordes (*Be there Lights made*) thus he speaketh: He onely sayd, and this admirable element was made, I meane the Sunne. What if you add that in the same moment, and with the same word, the same Creator made the Moone and all the Starres? Also vpon those wordes (*Let the waters bring forth*) thus he speaketh: What tongue can sufficiently prayse the maker? For euen as when he sayd to the earth, *Let it shoot forth*, and presently there appeared great plenty of sundry hearbes and flowers: So here he said, *let the waters bring*

bring forth, and forthwith so many kindes of Fowles, and creeping creatures were made, as no tongue can rehearse. Who (therefore) is like to thee among the strong O Lord?

Thou dost now plainly vnderstand O my soule, how great the power of thy maker is, whose breadth is infinite; whose length is eternall, sustenteyning and gouerning all thinges without wearinesse: whose high doth thinges which seem vnpossible, & are so, but to him onely: whose depth maketh thinges in such sort, that the maner therof surpasseth the vnderstanding of any Creature: For he maketh them of nothing, & in nothing, without tooles & without time,  
onely

Cap. 5

Psal. 148

onely by his worde and commandement : He said (saith the Prophet) and they were made, hee commanded, and they were created. Whence thou maist gather if thou be wise, how much it importeth thee to please and not offend him, and to haue him thy friend, and not thy enemy : For being offended with thee, hee can in a moment deprive thee of all Good, & fill thee with all Misery : neither is there any that can deliuer thee from his hands. If being naked and alone, thou shouldest meete with thy mortall enemy, who assayed thee with a sharpe Sword what wouldest thou doe ? how wouldest thou sweat, looke pale, & tremble?  
and

and casting thy selfe on thy knees begge for mercy? and yet he is a man; so that perhappes thou mightest escape by flight; or by struggling wrest the sword out of his hand, and deliuer thy selfe from death.

But what wilt thou doe when God is angry? From whome thou canst not flye, for he is euery where; whom thou canst not resist, for he is Almighty; and whom thou canst not delay, for he worketh in a moment by his command onely. Not without cause said the Apostle: *It is horrible to fall into the bandes of the liuing God.*

H.b. 10

But on the other side if thou please God, and haue him thy friend,

friend who is more happy then thou ? For he can if he will, and he will if he be thy friend, giue thee all good, and deliuer thee from all euill. It is also in thy power whiles thou liuest heere, to offend and make him thine enemy; or to please and make him thy friend.

For God first by his Prophets, and after by his Sonne and his Apostles, doth in the holy Scriptures continually inuice sinners to repentance, and the righteous to keepe his Commandements ; that hee might therby haue them both to be his friendes ; or rather his dearly beloued children and heyres of his euerlasting Kingdome.

Heare

Heare Ezechiell: *Line I saith our Lord God : I will not the death of the impious, but that the impious conuert from his way and line. Conuert, conuert yee from your euill wayes : and why will you dye O house of Israell? And after : The impiety of the impious shall not hurt him, in what day soener he shall conuert from his impiety.*

Eze. 33

And as Ezechiell speaketh, so doe Esay, Jeremy, and the other Prophets also : For the same Spirit spake alike in them all.

Heare the Sonne of God also beginning his Sermon: *Iesus (saith St. Mathew) began to Preach and to say, doe Penance for the Kingdome of Heanen is at hand.*

Math, 4.

Heare

1 Cor. 5

Hear the Apostle St. Paul speaking of himselfe and his fellow Apostles in his last Epistle to the *Corinthians* : For Christ (saith he) wee are Legates, God as it were exhorting by vs. For Christ we beseech you, be reconciled to God. What more plaine? What more pleasing? The Apostle doth beseech vs in the name of Christ to be reconcyled to God, and to please and not offend him: Who can doubt of Gods mercy if he truly returne to him? For he receiue them as a most louing Father receiue his prodigall Soane which returne vnto him.

Luke. 15

And when we are returned and pardoned; what doth he  
more



more require of vs to continue his children and friendes, but to keepe his Commandements? *If thou wilt enter into Life keepe the Commandements* saith our Lord. And least perhaps thou shouldest say, that without Gods assistance the Commandements cannot be kept: Heare St. *Augustine* in his Exposition of the Psalmes, where speaking of the hardest commandement, to witte of spending our liues for our brethren, he saith thus: *Non imperaret hoc Deus &c.* God would not command vs to doe it, if hee indged it vnpossible for man to doe. And if considering thy weaknesse, thou faintest vnder the Commandements; take comfort

Mat. 19

Aug. in  
Psal. 56

Ser. 16. de  
Pas. Dom

fort by the example : for the  
example concerneth thee much:  
He who gaue the example, is  
present also to giue the ayde.  
And, That euery worde may  
stand in the mouth of two;  
Heare St. Leo: Iustly (saith  
he) doth God require vs by his  
command, because hee doth  
preuent vs with his ayde.

Isay. 40

Math. 11

Why then doest thou feare  
O my soule, to enter into the  
way of the Commaunde-  
ments, since he runneth be-  
fore thee, who by the  
mighty helpe of his grace;  
Maketh crooked thinges be-  
come streight, and rough  
wayes plaine? For by this  
preuenting Ayde, The yoke  
of our Lord is made sweete,  
and his burthen Light; And  
Saint

Saint Iohn the Apostle saith:  
*His Commandements are not  
heavy.*

Ioh, 5

But if they seeme heavy to  
thee ; thinke how much  
more heavy the torments of  
Hell will be : and doe not  
(vnlesse thou be sencelesse)  
seek to trye them.

Oftentimes thinke with thy selfe  
and neuer forget, that now  
is the time of Mercy, and  
after of Iustice : Now of  
freedom to sinne : after of  
intollerable torments for  
sinne : Now may a man easi-  
ly compound with God, and  
with a little labour of repen-  
tance, obtaine a great par-  
don, and with a short  
sorrow, redeeme eternall  
lamentation.

Now

Now also with euery good  
 deed proceeding from Char-  
 ity obtaine the Kingdome of  
 Heauen : After, not for  
 all the wealth in the  
 world, procure one  
 droppe  
 of  
 colde water.



THE

THE TWELFE STEPP.

*From the Consideration of the  
greatnesse of Gods Wisdome  
by the Similitude of a  
Corporall quan-  
tity.*

**W**Ho so will atten-  
tively consider the  
breadth, length,  
height, and depth  
of Gods wisdome, may easily  
vnderstand how truely the A-  
postle writ in his Epistle to  
the Romans : God the only  
Wise.

Cap. I

Rom. 16

And to begiane from the  
breadth : Gods Wisdome is  
most broad because he know-  
eth all thinges distinctly and  
perfectly.

Iob. 14

perfectly. Neither doth hee know their ſubſtances onely; but alſo their partes, proper-tyes, vertues, accidents, and actions. Hence are theſe wordes: *Thou indeed haſt numbred my Stepps.* And, *Our Lord doth reſpect the wayes of a man, and conſidereth all his ſteppes.*

Math. 10

Wherefore if hee number and conſider all his ſteppes, much more doth he the good or bad actions of his minde? And if God haſt numbred the hayres of our head; much more doth hee know all the members of our bodyes, and all the vertues of our mindes: And if hee know the number of the Sea ſandes and droppes of rayne, as is gathered out  
of

of Ecclesiasticks : much more may wee beleue he knoweth the number of Starres and Angells ? And if all the *Idle wordes of men shall be iudged*, as our Lord himfelfe doth witnesse : His eares doubtlesse doe heare at once, all the wordes of Men whether they be corporall or mentall.

Eccle, 1

Math. 12

How infinite then is this Breadth of wisdom which comprehendeth at once all thinges that are, haue beene, shall be, or may be ? Neither doth the Diuine minde become more base, by the knowledge of so many particular inferiour thinges, as the foolish Wisdom of some Philosophers supposed : for perhappes we might thinke  
so,

so, If God did borrow his knowledge from things as we doe: But since hee beholdeth all things in his owne essence; there is no danger of basenesse.

Albeit, it be much more noble to borrow Knowledge as Men doe, then altogether to want it as Beastes doe: Euen as it is better to be blinde, as sensitiue liuing creatures may be: then without blindnesse to be vnapt to see, as stones are. Neither are the other members of the body more noble then the eyes, for that they can not be blinde: But the eyes are more noble because they can see, although they may also be blinde, as *St. Augustine* doth truly



truely teach in his bookes of  
the Citty of God. Thou  
oughtest therefore to be care-  
full my soule, alwaies and e-  
uery where; what thou dost,  
what thou speakest, and what  
thou thinkest, since thou  
canst not do, speake, or think  
any thing, but God seeth,  
heareth, and knoweth it. And  
if thou dare not doe or speake  
any euill (although thou ne-  
uer so much desire it) when  
thou thinkest a man seeth or  
heareth thee; how dardest  
thou thinke such things when  
God beholdeth thee and is  
offended with thee? *Esto a-*  
*nemine, &c.* Suppose no man see  
thee (saith St. *Augustine*) yet  
how wilt thou escape him who loo-  
keth from above, from whom

Aug. Ep  
109

T nothing

lib. de.  
virg.

Gen, 17

nothing is hid? And St. Basil  
in his booke of *Virginitie*  
speaking to a Virgin shutt vp  
alone in her Chamber, doth  
exhort her to reuerence that  
Spowse who is euery where  
with the Father and holy  
Ghost, accompanied with in-  
numerable multitudes of An-  
gels and soules of holy Fa-  
thers: *For there is none of them*  
(saith he) *but seeth all thinges*  
*euery where.* O happy shoul-  
dest thou be my soule, if thou  
were alwayes in this compa-  
ny: how perfectly shouldest  
thou leade thy life? How di-  
ligently wouldest thou auoyd  
all lightnesse and wandering?  
For so indeed our Lord sayd  
onceto Abraham: *Walke be-*  
*fore me, and be thou perfect:*  
That

That is, thinke that I alwayes  
see thee, and without doubt  
thou shalt be perfect.

The length of Gods Wis-  
dome is manifested by the  
knowledge of thinges to  
come. For his sight is so  
sharpe that he sawe from all  
eternitie what shall be in the  
last times, and for euer after:  
Then which length nothing  
greater can be imagined.  
*Thou hast understood* (saith  
David in the Psalmes) *my Co-*  
*gitations farre of.* And a lit-  
tle after: *Thou hast known all*  
*the last thinges, and them of*  
*old.* To wit, all thinges to  
come, and all thinges past.  
The bookes of the Prophets  
are full of most true and plain  
Predictions, which not they

Cap. 2

Psal, 138

Luk. 1

Isay 41

Isay, 45

themselves; but (as *Zacharie* saith) *God spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets, that are from the beginning.* This Prophecying therefore and foreseeing, is proper to God onely, as God himselfe sayth by *Isay*: *Showe what things are to come hereafter, and we shall knowe that ye are Gods.* And to consider a few things of many: *Isay* speaketh in this manner: *Thus saith the Lord to my Christ (Cyrus, whose right hand I have taken, to subdue the Gentyles before his face, and to turne the backs of Kinges, &c.* In which wordes the Monarchie of the Persians is foretolde; and *Cyrus* the first King of the Persians, is called by his proper name:

name : The reason also is set  
downe why God would ex-  
alt *Cyrus*, to wit, because he  
should release the captiuitie  
of *Babylon* : All which thinges  
were fulfilled about two hun-  
dred yeeres after. *Daniel* like-  
wise, by the similitude of a *Dan, a*  
great *Statua*, the head where-  
of was of gold, the breast of  
siluer, the belly and thighes  
of Brasse, the feete partly of  
Iron, and partly of earth ;  
doth plainly prophesie of the  
foure Monarchies of the *Ba-  
bylonians, Persians, Grecians,*  
and *Romans* ; and in the time  
of the last Monarchie, of the  
kingdome of Christ, to wit,  
of the Christian Church  
which should be greater then  
all those kingdomes. And

Dan. 11

Luke 19

afterward he so plainly describeth the warres of the successors of *Alexander the great*; that some Infidells thought those things were written after those wars were ended. And to omit the rest; Christ himselfe ( in *St. Luke* bewailing the destruction of Hierusalem ) doth likewise describe all things so plainly and particularly, as if he had bene to declare it as already past, and not as then to come: I let passe innumerable other Predictions, whereof (as I haue sayd) the bookes of the Prophets are full. But Astrologers, and all such South-sayers that will seeme to be as it were Gods Apes, are vtterly to be reiected:

For

For it cannot be that they should foretell the truth in things that happen casually, and especially by election; vnlesse perhappes some time by chance: For seeing the will of God doth gouerne and ouerrule all causes both necessary, casual, and free; and can when he pleaseth hinder inferior Causes: None can foretell the truth in any thing; but whom God shall be pleased to manifest his said will vnto, as often times he did vnto his Prophets. And this is so certaine, that the Deuills would be accounted Gods, chiefly because they founded Oracles, and foretolde thinges, to come as *St. Augustine* doth witness

T 4

Lib. 18  
Cap. 24

nelle in his bookes of the  
Citty of God. But that ex-  
cellent Doctor of the Church  
in his booke of the Deuinati-  
on of Deuills; doth plainly  
shewe, that their Deuination  
is as false as their Diuinitie.  
For they foretell nothing  
plainely, but what themselues  
are to doe, or which being  
elsewhere already done; they  
by the swiftnesse of their Na-  
ture; report to those that  
dwell farre off, as a thing to  
be done, or by their long ex-  
perience coniecture it to be  
done. After which manner,  
Mariners also are accustomed  
to foretell many things of  
the windes, husband-men of  
the weather, and Physicians of  
diseases. And when the deuills  
are



are asked of thinges to come which they knowe not : they vse to answere by circumstance of wordes and equiuocation. And when those thinges prooue false ; they lay the fault on their interpreters or Southsayers. Therefore our Lord onely (whose Wisdome is endlesse) foundeth true Oracles, and foretellethe the truth in all things to come both casuall and by election.

Gods wisdom also is most high, and farre aboue the wisdom of men or Angells. High of wisdom is knowne by the High of the obiect, power, forme, and Act. The Naturall and proportionable obiect of Gods wisdom is his diuine essence, which is so  
T 5 high,

Cap. 3

high, that it surpasseth the vnderstanding of men or Angels. And therefore the highest Angels cannot ascend to see God, vnlesse they be lifted vp by the light of glory. For which cause God in the holy Scriptures is called *inuisible: To the King of worlds immortall, inuisible onely God.* Saith the Apostle in his first Epistle to *Tymothie*; And after he affirmeth also: *That God inhabiteth light not accessible.* Power likewise which is in vs an accident; is in God a diuine substance and therefore higher without comparison then in vs. The Forme also is the higher the more it doth represent: and therefore those Angels which haue fewer and  
more

more vniuersall formes, are  
said to haue most knowledge.  
How high then is Gods wis-  
dome, which hath no forme  
but his owne Essence, which  
being simply one, suffiseth a-  
lone for God to behold him-  
selfe and all creatures which  
are made, shall be made or  
may be made? That wisdom  
moreouer is sayd to be most  
high, which knoweth most  
by fewest Actes: But God  
with one eternall sight, per-  
fectly knoweth himselfe and  
all other things. Therefore  
*the Wisdom of God is most  
high.* Lift vp now thine eyes  
O my soule, and behold how  
farre thy knowledge is inferi-  
our to the knowledge of thy  
maker: For thou by many  
Actes

1 Cor. 3

Psal, 33

lib. 4  
Cap. 33

Actes discoursing to and fro,  
 canst hardly knowe any one  
 thing perfectly: But thy Ma-  
 ker doth by one Act perfectly  
 and distinctly know himselfe  
 and all other thinges. Yet  
 thou which now art in darke-  
 nesse, mayst (if thou wilt en-  
 deauour) ascend so high by  
 the winges of faith and Cha-  
 ritie; that after the laying a-  
 side of this morrall body: *Be-  
 ing transformed from glory un-  
 to glory, in the light of God thou  
 mayst see God the light:* And  
 being made like to God, thou  
 also with one eternall sight  
 maist behold God in himselfe,  
 and thy selfe and all other  
 creatures in God. *For  
 what dost he not see (saith St.  
 Gregory in his Dialogues)*  
*Who*

*who seek him that seek all  
things. How great then  
shall be that glory, pleasure,  
and plenty, when being ad-  
mitted to that inaccessible  
Light, thou shalt be partaker  
Of all the good things of thy  
Lord?*

*The Queene of Saba, when  
she heard the Wisdome of  
Salomon, and saw the excel-  
lent Order of the seruantes of  
his house, was so astonished,  
that (as the Scripture saith)  
She had no longer spirit but  
Cried out, Blessed are thy men,  
and blessed are thy seruantes,  
which stand before thee al-  
wayes, and heare thy Wisdome,*

; Reg. 10

*But what is the wisdome  
of Salomon, to the Wisdome  
of God who Is the onely wise,*

yea *Wisdom* it selfe ? And  
Rem. 16 what is the Order of his ser-  
uantes to be compared with  
the Nine orders of Gods An-  
gells, whereof *Thousands* of  
Dan, 7 *thousandes minister to him, and*  
*ten thousand hundred thousands*  
*assist him* ? Surely if thou  
couldst fauour these thinges  
but a little ; thou wouldest  
most willingly doe or suffer  
any thing that thou mightest  
enioy God. *Be thou humbled*  
1 Pet. 5 *therefore in the meane while*  
*under the mighty hand of God,*  
*that he may exalt thee in the*  
*time of Visitation.* Subiect  
thy vnderstanding to Faith,  
that thou mayst be exalted to  
Vision : Subiect thy will to  
obey the Commaundements,  
that thou mayst be exalted  
into

*into the liberty of the Glory of  
the chidren of God : Subiect  
also thy flesh to patience and  
labour, that being glorified,  
God may exalt it to eternall  
rest.*

Rom. 8

*It remayneth that we con-  
sider the depth of Gods Wis-  
dome, which seemeth chiefly  
to consist in searching of  
Heartes and Reynes : To  
witt in the knowledge of  
mens thoughtes and desires,  
especially which are to come,  
whereupon we reade : *Man  
seeth those thinges which ap-  
peare, but our Lord beholdeth  
the heart. And, Thou onely  
hast knowen the hearts of the  
sonnes of Men. And, Thou  
hast vnderstood my cogitations  
foure off, my pathe thou hast  
searched**

Cap. 4

1 Reg. 16

2 Paral. 6

Psal. 138

Hier. 17

searched out, and thou hast  
foreseene all my wayes. And,  
He knoweth the secrets of the  
heart. And, The heart of  
Man is perverser, and un-  
searchable, who shall knowe it?  
I the Lord that search the heart  
and reynes.

Mat. 9  
Luk. 6  
Mar. 2

Which place the seauenty  
Interpreters haue translated,  
The heart of Man is deepe  
and unsearchable. And St.  
Ierome expounding this place  
doth truely note, that Christ  
is prooued to be God, be-  
cause he saw the heartes of  
men, which none but God  
can see. And Iesus seeing  
their thoughtes. But he knew  
their cogitations. Why thinke  
you these thinges in your  
heartes?

Euery



Euery thought therefore and desire of man, (although it be present and really exist) is so deepe ; that neither Angells, Deuills, or men can penetrate to the knowledge thereof : but yet a thought or desire to come, is much more deepe : For not onely are men and Angells vnable to penetrate it : but also the manner how God ( who onely knoweth it ) commeth to the knowledge thereof.

This did *David* seeme to signifie, when hee said : *Thy Knowledge is become merueilous of me.* For that (*Of me*) in the Hebrew phrase signifieth *Before me*, or *aboue me* ; so the sence is, *Thy Know-*

*Psal, 138*

Knowledge is more meruailous, then I am able to vnderstand how it is. And therefore hee addeth : *It is made great, and I cannot reach it ;* that is, It is lifted aboue my knowledge, and I cannot by any meanes ascend to the vnderstanding thereof.

He speaketh of the knowledge of Future thoughtes, because he said before : *Thou hast vnderstood my cogitations farre off, and thou hast foreseene all my wayes,* Therefore hee addeth concerning the fore-knowledge of those Cogitations and wayes : *Thy Knowledge is become meruailous of me, it is made great and I cannot reach to it.*

Some

Some one perhappes will  
Answere, and say: That God  
seeth these thoughts to come  
in his Eternitie, in which all  
things are present; or in the  
Predetermination of his will:  
but if it were so, then should  
not this knowledge be mer-  
ueilous. For wee also know  
what we intend to doe here-  
after, or what we haue now  
in hand.

But the Scripture saith that  
God searcheth the *Heart and*  
*Reynes*, and there seeth what  
man thinketh or desireth, or  
what hee will thinke or de-  
sire hereafter. And it is  
very admirable how God by  
searching the Heart and  
reynes, can see y there which  
yet is not, but dependeth  
of

of the freedome of the Will  
whether it shall be there or  
not.

As therefore it belongeth  
to the height of Gods pow-  
er, to make something of  
nothing, and to call those  
things which are not, as  
those things which are:  
So likewise it belongeth to  
the depth of his Wisdome  
by searching the Heart and  
Reynes, to see that there  
which as yet is not, as if it al-  
ready were, because doubt-  
lesse it shall be.

Cap. 5

But because I vndertake  
not to dispute questions,  
but to stirre vp and eleuate  
the soule to God; be thou  
therefore stirred vp my soule,  
Lamen. 3 and *Lift thy selfe above thy  
selfe.*

*selfe, as Ieremy exhorteth.*

Thinke of the profound depth of Gods Wisdome which searcheth the secrets of the heart, and seeth there many thinges which the heart it selfe seeth not.

O blessed *Peter* when thou saidst vnto our Lord : *Though I should dye with thee, I will not deny thee,* Surely thou spakest not with a double heart, but truely and sincerely as thou didst thinke ; Neither didst thou see that frailty in thy heart, which thy Lord saw in it when hee said : *Before the Cocke crowe twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.* For thy most skilfull phisition saw the infirmity of thy heart  
which

Mat. 26

which thou sawest not, and that was true which the phisition fore-tolde, and not that which the patient boasted. Thanke therefore thy Phisition, who as hee foresaw and fore-tolde thy disease: so by a powerfull medicine inspired from aboue into thy penitent soule, he soone cured it.

Psal, 18

O Good, ô pious, ô most wise, and most mighty Phisition: *From my secret sinnes cleanse me.* How many sinnes haue I which I doe not bewayle, nor wash with teares because I see them not?

Giue me thy grace wherewith thou searchest heartes and reynes: And my euill thoughts desires, and workes  
which

which I see not (thou which  
seest them) shew me ; and  
looking backe mercifully vp-  
on me ; produce in me a  
Fountaine of teares, that  
while time serueth they  
may be clenfed and  
washed away by  
thy grace,  
Amen.



THE

THE  
THIRTEENTH STEPP,

*From the Consideration of  
Gods practicall  
Wisdome.*

Cap. I

WE haue considered  
ſpeculatiue Wiſ-  
dome of God:

Let vs now confi-  
der his practicall wiſdome,  
which alſo we may call Effe-  
ctiue. This Wiſdome hath  
her Breadth, Length, Height,  
and Depth.

The breadth is knowne by the  
Creation, the length by the  
Preſeruation of things crea-  
ted, the height by the worke  
of Redemption, the depth by  
Prouidence & predeſtination

And



And to begin from the Creation, God hath made all things in wisdom, as it is said in the Psalme: And hath powdered her out vpon all his workes as Ecclesiasticus writeth. As therefore by the Creation of all things of nothing, wee knowe the power of their Maker: So likewise by the admirable work-manshippe which we beholde in euery one of them, we wonder at the wisdom of the same Maker. For he hath disposed all things in measure, and number and weight as the wise Man saith. And with this fauour God hath seasoned all things, that thereby we may learne to knowe how saoury, amiable, and desirabile *Wisdom*

*Psal, 103*

*Ecclus, 1*

*Wisd. 11*

*it selfe is.* All creatures therefore haue a certaine measure, number and weight: First to distinguish them from God; who hath no *Measure*, because he is immense: nor *Number* because he is most perfectly and simply *One in Essence*: Nor *Weight* because his price and value exceedeth all estimation.

Gen, 1<sup>o</sup>

Secondly, for that they are good and beautifull as *Moyser* truly sayd: God saw all things that he had made, and they were very good. All things therefore haue that *Measure* which is needful for them to obtaine the end for which they are made, in such sort, that there can be no addition or subtraction therein, but forth-  
with

with the thing becommeth deformed, vnprofitable, and lesse good then before. *God made all thinges good in their time* (saith the Preacher) *Wee cannot add any thing, nor take away any from those thinges which God hath made that he may be feared.* God therefore hath giuen to the heauen a most large *Measure*, that it might containe all thinges belowe within the compasse thereof : To the ayre much lesse then to the heauen : yet greater then to the earth and waters which make one Globe enclosed round about by the ayre. To an Elephant he hath giuen a great measure of body, that he might be able to carry great burthens,

*Eccle, 3*

and Castles full of men. To  
a Horse a body somewhat  
lesse, because he is to carry  
but one ryder. Birdes he  
hath made small, that they  
might hang their Nestes v-  
pon the boughes of Trees.  
Bees and Antes the least of al,  
that they might hide them-  
selues in their Hiues, or in  
holes of the earth. The like  
we may say of *Number*, God  
hath made but one Sunne,  
because one Sunne suffised to  
giue light to the whole earth,  
and with his brightnesse to  
make the day. He made al-  
so but one Moone, because  
one Moone suffised to giue  
light in the night: Yet would  
he haue many starres, that  
when as the Sunne and Moon  
were

were both absent (as at their  
coniunction it happeneth )  
they might in some sort put  
away the darkenesse of the  
night. Neither hath he one-  
ly assigned a necessary Num-  
ber to all things ingenerall,  
but also hath appointed to  
each thing in particular such  
Number of partes, that there  
can nothing be added or ta-  
ken away. God hath giuen  
a man two eyes, two eares,  
two handes, two feete, one  
nose, one mouth, one breast,  
one head : And he hath ap-  
peared a very beautifull and  
comely creature : Change  
this order : Let a man haue  
one eye, two noses, one eare,  
two mouthes, one hand, one  
foote, two breastes, or two  
V 3 heades.

heades, and nothing can be more vnseemely, or more deformed.

Moreouer God hath giuen Weight, to wit that estimati-on to euery Creature as the Nature thereof doth require. By the name of Weight or price we vnderstand such qualities as make thinges good and pretious: And they are in number three: Necessary partes that nothing be superfluous or defectiue: Cominensuration or an apt proportion of partes: And an externall amiable colour of the body, with such internall vertues as shall be profitable and necessary for diuers actions. But it is merueylous to consider what vertue God hath

hath giuen to sundry very  
small and slender Creatures,  
that as his power is in great,  
so his wisdom might be seen  
in small things. Who can  
conceale what vertue is in a  
graine of Mustard-seede?  
which is the least of all seeds,  
so that the eye can hardly dis-  
cerne it: and yet so great a  
tree lyeth hidden therein:  
*That the Faules of the ayre*  
*come and dwell in the braunches*  
*thereof as the Truth speaketh*  
in the Gospell. Neither is  
this proper to Mustard seede  
onely; but common to all  
other seedes in whose vertue  
lyeth hid the roots, stemms,  
branches, leaues, blossomes  
and fruite of great trees.

Truely if we did not know

this by experience, we should not easily perswade men, that from so small a seede, so many sundry great things could euer spring. Who likewise would imagine that an Ant, a Gnat, a Flea, and such small creatures, had feete which speedily moue, a head, a hart, inward and outward senses, and prudence and iudgement after their manner although very vnperfect? Who also would suppose that in these and such like small creatures there should be such force to pierce and enter the quicke flesh that they become not onely very troublesome to men, but also to Elephantes and Lyons whome they terrifie? *Great therefore is our Lord,*  
*and*



and great is his Wisdome  
both in great things and in  
small.

The Prince of Phisitians  
(although an Ethnicke) did  
sometimes wonder at the  
cunning workmanship which  
God hath wrought in a mans  
hand; and cryed out in praise  
of the Maker. What oughtest  
thou then O Christian to doe,  
who seest that not onely the  
bodies of men and other li-  
uing creatures; but also the  
heauens, the starres, the An-  
gells and the immortall soules  
of men, are made with vncre-  
dible Wisdome by the same  
most wise Creator?

Gal. in lib  
de part.

Moreover the length of his  
Practicall wisdom appeareth  
in the preservation of things,

Cap. 2

as the breadth therof in their Creation : but especially of such as are corruptible.

First then if any one will but consider how God nourisheth and causeth hearbes, plantes, beastes, and the bodies of men to growe, and preserueth them to the vtermost; he cannot but with astonishment wonder at Gods Wisdome. For with earth and water he nourisheth hearbes and plantes; and causeth that the nourishment doth passe from the roote to the stock, and from the stock, it is drawne vp by a certaine vertue to the boughes, leaues, and fruite : so that it runneth into euery part after an admirable

admirable manner. Men likewise and some beastes he nourisheth with hearbes, Apples and with the flesh of beastes, and causeth the nourishment to enter and passe through all partes of the body with such facilitie and delight as may seeme vncredib-  
le. God dealeth like a learned and gentle Phisition; who tempereth his medicines in such sort, that the Patients may receaue them not onely easily but also willingly. For meates doubtlesse are Medicines, which vnlesse men receaue often, they cannot escape death. But God our most louing and skilfull phisition, hath first giuen a taste vnto meates, that they may  
be

be taken with delight; then he hath multiplyed them with infinite variety, to take away yerkfomnesse: And lastly after diuers alterations in the mouth, stomach, liuer and hart, he changeth the meate into so thinne a iuyce, that it passeth without scission or paine through all the veynes and pores of the body vnto all the partes of the flesh, bones, and synnowes, euen when we sleepe and feele it not. The Philosophers wonder at the Wisdome of Nature when they consider these things. But what Wisdome can there be in thinges without life sence. and reason? Therefore not the wisdom of nature but the wisdom

wisdom of God is to be admired, who made nature, and found out the way how these merueilous thinges might be done. Heare the wisdom of God speaking in the Gospell : *Consider the Lillies of the fie'd how they growe : They Labour not, neither doe they spinne, and God doth so clothe &c.* Therefore not the wisdom of Nature, but God maketh the Lillies to growe, and as it weare clotheth them with so comely garments. Which also may be said of the nourishment and growth of all liuing creatures as the Apostle witnesseth saying : *Neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth : but he that giveth the increase, God.*  
And

Math, 6

1 Cor, 3

And if the Wisdome of God doth feede, nourish and preserue Plantes and Beastes in this mortall life after so admirable a manner, thinke if thou canst O my soule how God doth feede the mindes of Angells and Men in eternall life ? For on Earth wee are fedd with earthly meates, albeit they are seasoned by Gods Wisdome : But in Heauen, Wisdome it selfe is the meate and drinke of those that liue for euer.

O Happy shouldest thou be, if thou couldest thoroughly vnderstand what it is :  
1 Cor, 15 *God shall be all in all ; what ( I say ) it is that God the chiefe Happinesse shall be to all the Saintes, meate, drinke, cloath,*

cloath, life and all thinges  
whatsoever. Surely thou  
wouldest loathe all thinges  
present, and onely *Minde* Coloss. 3  
*and seeke the thinges that are*  
*aboue.*

But let vs proceed. It also  
resembleth a Miracle, that for  
the preservation and conti-  
nuance of Mans life; God  
hath giuen to very small  
thinges, a very long and con-  
tinuall motion without inter-  
mission. Men take great  
paines to make the wheeles  
of a Clocke runne by force  
of weights foure and twenty  
houres.

How great then is the Wis-  
dome of God, who causeth  
the nourishing Facultie to  
worke without ceassing so  
long

long as men, beastes, or trees doe live? And the longues and pulses to mooue continually seauenty yeares and more. For of necessitie the nourishing facultye must worke, and the longues and pulses must mooue from the first entrance into life, vntill the end thereof. Those therefore that live vntill fourescore or ninetie yeares of age, must of necessitie haue their longues and pulses mooue all that while. And before the flood when men liued nine hundred yeares, their longues and pulses (which are thinges very small and soone out of temper) wrought nine hundred yeares without rest or intermission.

Truely,



Tively, they that wonder at these things and doe not reverence and adore Gods Wisdome in them, are doubtlesse deprived of all light of Wisdome.

Moreover, albeit Gods Wisdome can without the labour of men and beastes and without the ministerie of the Sunne or other secondary causes, produce and preserve herbes and trees, so that all living creatures might have meate in readinesse: yet it pleased him to vse the service of secundary causes, and the labour and industry of men and of beastes, that none might be idle; but that every one might exercise their strength.

He

He would also that among men some should be rich, and some poore, that they all might haue occasion to loue vertue, and to be tyed together in the bond of Charity.

For the rich may therefore vse Mercy and Liberality: and the poore, Patience and Humility. The Rich also need the labour of the Poore, to till their fieldes, to feede their Cattle, and by diuers trades to prouide such things as euery one hath neede of.

The Poore againe want the helpe of the Rich, to giue them money and meanes to prouide for themselues meat, drinke, cloath, and other necessaryes. Neither is there any canse why the poore  
should

should complaine of Gods Wisdome : For God ( who knoweth all and loueth all ) hath giuen to euery one what hee fore-saw, to be most conuenient for them, to obtaine euerlasting life.

As earthly Phisitions commaund some of their Patients to be let bloud : & others to drinke wine, eat flesh, and vse recreation. Many poore folkes doubtlesse shall now be saued, who if they had bin rich, had perished eternally.

And although the rich may also be saued, if they seeke to be rich in Good workes, and giue that willingly which they receiued of our common Lord, not to hide but to bestow : Yet it cannot be denied,

denied, but that pouertie is a safer, plainer, and shorter way to heauen, then wealth. Our heauenly master doth not deceaue vs who saith: *Amen*

Math, 6

*I say to you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdome of heauen. And a-*

Luk. 6

*gaine, Blessed are yee poore: for yours is the Kingdome of God: and woe to you that are rich, because you haue your consolation.*

1 Tim, 6

Neither doth the Apostle deceaue vs, who in his first Epistle to *Timothie* saith: *They that will be made rich, fall into temptation and the snare of the deuill, and many desires unprofitable and hurtfull, which crowne men into destruction and perdition.*

And

And what our Lord and his  
 Apostles taught by word,  
 they confirmed also by ex-  
 ample. For our Lord saith  
 of himselfe : *The Foxes haue  
 holes, and the Fowles of the ayre  
 nestes : but the Sonne of  
 Man hath not where to repose  
 his head.* And the Apostle  
 saith of himselfe & his fellow  
 Apostles : *Vntill this houre,  
 we doe both hunger and thirst,  
 and are naked, and are beaten  
 with buffets, and are Wanderers,  
 That is, haue no house of our  
 owne. Neither ought we to  
 doubt but that y<sup>e</sup> wisdom of  
 Gods Son & of his Disciples  
 chose the plainest and safest  
 way vnto life: But because, the  
 number of fooles is infinite. Few  
 choose this way willingly;  
 but*

Luk. 9

1 Cor. 4

Eccles. 1

but many declyne from it with all their affection and power.

Lastly the length of Gods wisdom is scene, in that as it is it selfe eternall, so it hath engrafted in all thinges a most liuely instinct to preserve themselves, and to prolong their life and being as long as they can. Wee see men, (when they perceave themselves to be in danger of their liues) endeavour their vtmost, and spare no cost or labour to preserve the same. We see beastes to fight, and strive euen about their strength with those that ouer master them, rather then they would loose their liues. We see a burning candle

candle when it is almost out, rayse vp it selfe two or three times, and send forth a great flame, that it may seeme to strue as much as it can, not to goe out. We see droppes of water hanging some-time vpon wood or stone to become round, and to holde themselves together as long as they can, least they fall and perish.

We see heauie thinges against nature to ascend, and light thinges to descend least *Vacuitie* should happen, whereby they being seuered from the rest of thinges, could not be preserved. But the loue which God hath giuen to parents toward their young ones

is so admirable, that it may seeme vncredible. We see the Hen feede her Chickings, and fast her selfe; and though she be weake and feeble, to fight most eagerly against the Kytes, Dogges, and Foxes. And what labours and throwes women willingly endure to bring their children into the world, and after vp in the world, we all knowe. The cause of this is the Councell of Gods Wisdome, who to maintaine this propagation as a shadowe of his *Eternitie*; hath engrafted in brute and wilde beastes, and in all liuing Creatures that haue sence, a most vehement loue towards their young ones.

For



For seeing there are many kindes of Beastes and Fowles which men seeke to destroy either for gaine, as Hares, Bores, Stagges, Thrushes, Quayles, Partridges, and almost all kindes of Fishes: or least they should doe hurt, as Wolues, Foxes, Serpents and other without number the like: Many of those kindes of Creatures should haue perished long since; If Gods wisdom had not by this Loue provided for their preservation and propagation.

If then the Naturall loue of all liuing thinges to this short and troublesome life be so great, what ought our Loue to be to the Blessed and eternall Life? O blindness

and folly of Man.

All thinges strive euena-  
boue their strength to pre-  
serue this short life which is  
but a *Shadow of eternitie* : and  
Man that hath reason will not  
strive ( I say not aboue but  
according to his strength) for  
the Eternitie of a most happy  
life. All thinges by instinct  
of Nature feare and eschue  
temporall Death aboue all  
Euill : And man who is in-  
dued with reason and taught  
by Faith, doth neither feare  
nor eschue Eternall death, as  
he doth Temporall euills.

Truely therefore said the  
Preacher : *The number of  
Foolles is infinite.* And truely  
also said the *Truth* in the Gos-  
pell : *How narrow is the gate,*  
and

Eccle, 1

Math 7

and strait is the way that leadeth to Life : and few there are that finde it.

The Height of Gods Practicall Wisdome is seene in the worke of our Redemption. *Non satiabar &c. I was not filled (saith St. Augustine) with thy admirable sweetnesse, to consider the height of thy Councell touching the saluation of Man-kinde.*

Cap. 3

Conf. lib. 9. cap. 6

And surely it was a most high Councell by the Ignominie of the Crosse to repaire all the damages which the Craft of the Deuill had caused by the sinne of the first man; and so to repaire them, that the worke repaired became more beautifull, then it was before the reparation.

Foure Euills were caused by the sinne of *Adam*. *Inimic* to God by his Pride and Disobedience : the punishment of him, and of all Mankind by the losse of *Gods grace*, and of eternall Happinesse : The sorrow of the Angells to whom the Iniury done to God, and the misery fallen to Man did very much displease : The tryumph of the Deuill and of all the wicked Spirits, who reioyced to see Man ouercome and cast downe by them.

All these Euills the Wisdom of God by *h* mystery of the Crosse tooke away, and turned them to greater good: so that, not without cause the Church singeth : O *happy fault*

fault which had such a Redeemer. For if a Taylor could by putting in some other costly peece, so amend a precious new garment rent and torne, that it should appeare more beautifull and precious then it was before, it might truly be called a happy mending which gaue occasion to such mending.

*Adam* therefore being waxen proude by the craft and enuy of the Deuill; sought to be like God, and broke his Commandement; And so after a sort tocke vnto himselfe Gods honour.

But Christ the second *Adam*, Humble & himselfe made phil. 2  
obedient vnto death; And restored vnto God much greater

honour then the first *Adam* by his pride and disobedience had taken away. For *Adam* was a meeke man, and if hee had obeyed, it had bin in a small matter. For what great matter had it been for our first Parentes to haue abstained from the Fruite of one forbidden Tree, hauing plenty of many more excellent? Therefore their sinne was the greater, in that their obedience was in a thing easie and of no labour to performe.

But Christ was God and Man, and humbled himselfe to obey God his Father in a thing most hard and laborious, to witt, in the death of the Crosse, which was full of paine and ignominie.

Where

Wherefore if we consider the eminency of the person, and the depth of his Humility and Obedience, nothing can be imagined more to Gods honour and glory, nor more meritorious then that *Humble obedience of Christ*. For which cause our Lord said most truly in the Gospell : *I haue glorified thee vpon earth.* For *Iesus Christ* did glorifie God his Father with vspeakable glory before the Angells of heauen and before all the Soules of the Prophets and others to whom these things were knowne. And if the Angells at Christs birth for the humility of the *Crib* did sing : *Glory in the Highest to God.* With greater ioy did Ioh. 17  
Luk, 2

X 4      they

they sing it for the humility  
of the Crosse.

Moreover, Man if he had  
not sinned, had obtained at  
the most but to be equall  
with Angells : but now by  
the Redemption which is in  
Jesus Christ, man-kinde hath  
obtained, that a Man being  
exalted aboue Angells, sit-  
teth at the right hand of God  
and is become the Lord both  
of Angells and of men. For  
so of Christ writeth St. Peter  
the Apostile in his first Epistle:

1 Pet. 3

*Being gone into Heauen, An-  
gells and Potestates, and pow-  
ers subiect to him.*

Phil. 2

*And his  
fellow Apostile St. Paul to the  
Philippians : For the which  
thing God also hath exalted  
him, and hath giuen him a name  
which*



which is above all names : that  
in the name of Iesus euery Knee  
bowe of the cœlestialls, terrestri-  
alls, and infernalls. There-  
fore the Sonne hath glorified  
the Father after an vnspeake-  
able manner by the humility  
of his Passion ; And the Fa-  
ther hath also after an vn-  
speakeable manner glorified  
the Sonne by exalting him  
vnto his right hand : Which  
glorification hath in such sort  
redounded vnto all man-  
kinde ; that truely they are  
most vngratefull which ac-  
knowledge not so infinite a  
benifite , and giue not God  
thanks therefore. . Yea not  
onely Christ God and man :  
but also his blessed Mother is  
exalted aboue all the quires

of Angells, though she be not  
God, but a humane Creature.  
Wherefore men hauing recei-  
ued more glory then they  
should haue had if the first  
man had not sinned, may iust-  
ly cry out : *O happy fault which  
had such a Redeemer.* Moreo-  
uer, as the holy Angells were  
made sorrowfull for the Fall  
of the first man, as for y<sup>e</sup> grie-  
uous mishap of their younger  
brother: so likewise they were  
made glad through the Copi-  
ous Redemption wrought by  
Christ. For if there be ioy in  
heauen *Before the Angells, vpon  
one sinner that doth penance,*  
how much greater may we  
beleue was the ioy before  
those Angells, when they saw  
Gods iustice fully satisfied by  
Christ

Luk, 15

Christ a man for man-kinde,  
and by the key of the Crosse  
the kingdome of Heauen o-  
pened to all beleeuers : Nei-  
ther may we suspect that the  
holy Angells did repine be-  
cause God had exalted Christ  
a man, and the Blessed virgin  
aboue them : For there is no  
enuy in the Angells, but they  
are full of most seruent chari-  
ty; *And Charity ennieth not,*  
*is not puffed up,* is not sorrow-  
full for anothers good : but  
reioyceth with all the righte-  
ous for their happinesse no  
lesse then for her owne. The  
Church therefore truely sing-  
eth : *Mary is assumed into*  
*Heauen, the Angells reioyce*  
It saith not are sorrowfull:  
*But the Angells reioyce to see*

Cor, 13

the Virgin mother of God exalted aboue the *Quires of Angells*, to the *Heauenly Kingdomes*.

The Angells knowe also that God hath done it most iustly, who doth all thinges *in perfect Wisdome and Iustice*: and their will is so vnited to Gods will by the vnseperable bond of Loue; that whatsoeuer pleaseth him, pleaseth them likewise, and can neuer displease them.

But the Deuill who triumphed for a time, because hee had overcome and cast down the First man: became after more sorrowfull for *ſ* victory of Christ a Man, then he was ioyfull before. For by *ſ* victory of Christ it was brought

to

topasse, that now not onely men as *Adam* was; but also women and children insult and triumph over the Deuill. It had beene no dishonour to the Deuill to haue beene overcome by *Adam* in Paradise, when he had no ignorance nor infirmitie, but was armed with originall iustice, which did in such sort subordinate his sensuall part vnto reason, that it could not rebell, vntill his minde first rebelled against God. But for the Deuill to be now overcome by a mortall man that is a Pilgrim, and subiect to ignorance and concupiscence, is a uery great dishonour. And yet he is so overcome  
by

by the grace of Christ that many haue triumphed in chastitie, patience, humility, and charitie, although, he ceaseth not dayly to cast his fierie Dartes of tentations and persecutions. And heerein the Hight of Gods wisdom is exceedingly to be admired. For God foresawe that the contempt of temporall riches, of fleshly pleasures, and worldly honours (*Which are the snares of the deuill and drowne men into destruction and perdition*) was behoouefull for man-kinde against the deceites of the deuill; What therefore did he to make them forsake these thinges and to loue their contraries, to wit, chastitie, pouertie, humilitie,

(Tim, 6

humilitie, patience and contempt of the world? Himselfe descended from heauen, and taking the forme of a seruant, made this bitter Medicine (which was behoouefull for man that was sicke) become so pleasant & sweet by his example, that many men now loue fasting, better then feasting, pouertie then riches, virginie then Wedlocke, martyrdom then daintinesse, to obey then to commaund, and to be humbled then to be exalted. For who seeing God in shape of man to be poore, humble, patient, continent, and (which is most merueylous) nayled to a Crosse, and willingly shedding his precious blood to die for mankinde,

kinde, will not be encouraged to follow him?

Isay, 12

1 Cor. 2

Phil. 3

This was the high inuention of Gods wisdom whereof *Isay* prophesieth saying: *Make his inuentions knowne among the people.* Yet notwithstanding, this high wisdom of God seemeth folly not onely to the wise men of this world (as the Apostle saith in his first Epistle to the Corinthians) but also to carnall and sensuall men, who belecue in Christ but refuse to follow the steppes of Christ, whom the same Apostle calleth: *The enemies of the Crosse of Christ.*

But thou O my soule endeavour to sucke hony out of the rocke and Oyle out of the hardest stone; that is, wisdom



wisdome out of folly, the  
wisdome of God out of the  
folly of the Crosse; search  
diligently and attentiuely  
who he is that hangeth on the  
Roode, and why he so han-  
geth; and when thou hast  
found it is he *That sitteth*  
*upon the Cherubims, yea, Who*  
*sitteth on the right hand of the*  
*maiestie in the high places,*  
thou shalt soone vnderstand  
that he hangeth not there for  
his offences, nor because of  
his weakenesse or the power  
of others: but voluntarily  
through his feruent desire to  
satisfie Gods iustice for the  
sinnes of all the world;  
for the honour and glo-  
ry of God the Father:  
for the eternall saluation

Psal, 98

Heb. I

cf

Ephes, 5

Gal, 2

of the Elect: And as the Apostle speaketh : *That he might present to himselfe a glorious Church; not hauing spot or wrinkle.* And lastly for thy sake, *Because he lasse thee, and deliuered himselfe for thee, a sacrifice and oblation to God in to the odour of sweetnesse:* When as (I say) thou shalt finde these things most true: Loue from the bottome of thy hart such a *Benefactor:* Seeke to follow him, and begin to thirst feruently after the glory of God, and the saluation of all nations, but especially after the beautie and glory of the whole Church and thine owne eternall saluation. Beginne thoroughly to hate iniquitie, and to thirst  
after

after puritie of hart and perfect iustice, that at length thou mayst also desire to be partaker of thy Lords Crosse in tribulations and afflictions; that heereafter thou mayst rise with the iust to glory, and not with the wicked to punishment.

There remaineth the depth of Gods practicall wisdome which consisteth in his providence, predestination, and iudgements. For it is written: *Thy iudgements are great depth.* First then Gods providence is very admirable, because he gouerneth all Creatures immediately, and directeth them to their endes: *He (saith the wise man) hath equally care of all,* that is, God without

Cap 4

Psal. 35

Wis. 6

Math, 10

without exception hath care of all, so that *A Sparrow* shall not fall upon the ground without Gods providence as our Saviour saith: Truly one chiefe Pastor may gouerne all the Christian world by generall providence: but not by particular, which comprehendeth every Christian; and therefore he calleth many Bishops to take part of the Charge: And one king may gouerne many Provinces by generall providence; but not by particular which concerneth euery subiect, and therefore he hath many vize-royes, Deputies, and Presidents. But God hath as much care of euery one

one in particular, as of all ingenerall, and of all ingenerall as of euery one in particular. *A Sparrow is not forgotten of God. The haire of our head are all numbred by him, and not one of them shall perish. The young Ravens being forsaken of their Parents are not forsaken by God.*

Luke 12  
Math. 10

Psal. 146

How safely therefore mayst thou rest my soule in the bosome of such a Father? Although thou were in darkenesse? Among the mouthes of Lyons and Dragons? Among innumerable legions of spirits? Cleaue onely therefore to him in true loue, holy feare, certaine

Wis, 8

1 Tim, 1  
17

Wis, 9

certaine hope, and assured faith. Neither doth Gods prouidence take care of thinges present and particular : but *Reacheth from end to end mightily, and disposeth all thinges sweetly.* For which cause God is called *The King of worldes* : For he hath appointed the *Order of worldes*, and disposed the successions of Kingdomes, and the changes and varietie of seasons from all eternitie. To God nothing can happen strange, vnlooked for, or vnthought of: *But the cogitations of mortall men are fearefull, and our prouidences uncertaine as the wise man saith.* For of thinges to come we haue but vncertaine coniectures : but God knoweth

knoweth all thinges to come as certainly as thinges past and present, and disposed in his minde before the making of the world, the order and succession of all thinges. Therefore our holy Mother the Church doth publicquely and securely affirme : *That Gods prouidence erreth not in the order and disposition of thinges.*

But because the reason of Gods prouidence is most secret, *And his iudgements are great depth,* it cometh to passe, that some seeing many euills to be committed among men and left vnpunished : fall to beleue that either humaine affaires are not gouerned by Gods prouidence, or els that those euills

*Psal, 35*

ib. 1. de  
Ord. c. 1

1 Cor. 4

evils are done by the will of God. Both which opinions are wicked; but the latter is the worst as St. *Augustine* writeth: And such runne into the downefall of these errors, who behold Gods providence in part, and in part behold it not. For whereas they ought to expect the end of thinges which at the day of iudgement shall be made manifest vnto all: they iudge rashly before the time, and are greatly deceaued. Therefore the Apostle cryeth out in the Epistle to the Corinthians: *Iudge not before the time, untill our Lord doe come, who will lighten the hidden thinges of darkenesse, and will manifest the*



the Councell of heartes. Saint Augustine declareth this by an excellent similitude : *Si quis in vermiculato pavemento &c.* If one (saith he) should beholde in a chequered Pavement the workmanship onely of one small peece thereof ; hee might blame the Workeman as ignorant of order and composition ; to witt, because he seeth but one little parcel of the worke ; but the greatest part he seeth not. But if hee saw all the parties and their coherence : hee would doubtlesse very much commend both of the worke and the Workeman.

Euen so many see the wicked prosper, and the righteous punished and afflicted : but they know not what God

Y

doth

Iob, 22

doth reserve hereafter for the iniquity of the wicked, or for the patience of the righteous: and therefore they blasphemed with them which in *Iob* said: *God walketh about the Poles of Heauen, neither doth hee consider our thinges.*

Mal. 2

And with others which in *Malachy* say: *Euery one that doth euill is good in the sight of our Lord, and such please him.*

Saint *Augustine* vseth also another similitude taken from Verses. For if when one heareth an heroycall verse, he should say in the beginning or in the midst thereof, that the verse was not good, hee might iustly be reprehended of folly: for he should expect vntill all the sillables were

were founded ; and then he might finde fault therewith if it pleased him not : Euen so, they are most sonde who dare discommend the most orderly prouidence of God, before the whole course thereof be runne out.

Therefore my Soule if thou be wise, endeauour all thou canst that *Euill be not done*, for so doth God command thee : but *why* he suffereth *euill* to be done leaue it to his Iudgements, which may be Secret but neuer vniust.

But although the Reason of Gods prouidence in governing humane affaires is very deepe : yet the reason of his Eternall predestination and reprobation is deeper

Cap. 5

without comparison. For why, God filleth many of the wicked with temporall goods and leaueth their sinnes unpunished in this life : And againe, why he suffereth many Innocents to be pressed with pouerty and to be vniustly afflicted, tormented and killed, we cannot truly search out the particulers : but we may assigne some probable generall cause. For God often causeth the wicked to abound with temporall goods, to reward some of their good morall workes, albeit he will not giue them eternall life : or to allure them thereby to be conuerted from their sins, and be brought to the hope and desire of eternal benefits.

Some

Sometimes also he punisheth not their sinnes in this life, because he will sufficiently punish them in Hell. But the righteous he suffereth to be afflicted with pouerty, ignominy, and diuers other vexations, as well to purge their light sinnes in this life : as also to reward their patience, humility, and other vertues with greater glory in Eternall life. But why God loued *Jacob* and hated *Esau* before they did either good or euill who can tell ? And this is that which the Apostle wondereth at in his Epistle to the *Romans*. For they were twinnes, Brothers borne of the same Father and Mother : and yet God by predestination

Mal. 1

Rom. 9

loued the one, and by reprobation hated the other. And least perhappes some might say that God fore-saw the good workes of the one, and the euill workes of the other: the Apostle preuenteth this answere saying: *This was done that the purpose of God according to election might stand.*

And he alleageth the wordes of God in *Moses*: *I will haue mercy on whome I haue mercy: and I will shew mercy to whome I will shew mercy.*

Who also will not wonder, that one should perseuer a long time in good workes as *Indas* the Traytor, and at the end of his life giue ouer and perish: And another to continue a long time in euill workes

workes as the good Theefe,  
and at the end of his life be  
conuerthed and goe into Para-  
dise ? But thou wilt say :  
*Iudas* betrayed Christ, and the  
Theefe confessed Christ. It  
is true : but could not *Christ*  
*haue looked on Iudas as hee loo-*  
*ked on Peter ?* And inspired  
*Iudas* with that powerfull  
Grace which no hard heart  
can refuse ? And could not  
Christ haue giuen Faith & re-  
pentance to both the Theeues  
which were hanged with him  
as he did to one of them : or  
suffer them both to dye in  
their sinnes, as he suffered the  
one of them ? Who likewise  
can tell the reason why God  
taketh away some, least *Malice*  
*should change their vnderstan-*

Luk, 22

Wisd. 4

ding as the wise man speaketh  
 of *Enoch* : And many he taketh  
 not away, but suffereth  
 them to fall from vertue to  
 vice, and to end their dayes  
 therein ? What shall we say  
 of whole Nations, some  
 whereof are very soone, o-  
 thers very long before they  
 be called vnto the Faith with-  
 out which none can be saved?  
*For hee that belieueth not is al-*  
*ready iudged.* And as the A-  
 postle speaketh : *Every one*  
*whosoever shall inuocate the*  
*name of our Lord, shall be saved.*  
*How then shall they inuocate in*  
*whom they haue not believed?*  
*Or how shall they beleue him*  
*whome they haue not heard?*  
*And how shall they beare with-*  
*out a Preacher ? but how shall*  
*they*

Ioh. 5

Rom. 10



they preach unlesse they be sent?

These are therefore most high and deepe Secrets which the eternall Father hath hidde in the *Depth of his Wisdome*, whereat the Apostle wondereth but declareth them not when he saith : *O depth of the riches of the wisdome and of the Knowledge of God : how incomprehensible are his iudgements, and his wayes unsearchable ? For who hath knowne the minde of our Lord ? or who hath bin his Counseller ? This onely is lawfull for vs to know : That in God there is no iniquity : And that at the last day there shall be none but shall truly say : Thou art iust O Lord and thy Iudgement right.*

Moreouer this Secret is pro-

Y 5      fiteable

Rom, I I

Psal, I I 8

fitable to vs all : for hereby it commeth to passe, that the wicked shall not dispaire of their saluation, nor the righteous presume therof. Good men also shall not be hopelesse of the conuersion of the wicked, but pray for all, and carefully seeke their saluation. And againe none (how good and holy soeuer) shall haue occasion to be proude, but with *Feare and trembling worke their saluation.*

Phil. 2

And thou my soule (having considered all these thinges) *Labour by good workes to make sure thy vocation and election,* as St. Peter the Apostle doth admonish thee in his last Epistle. But what those good Workes are which make sure thy

1 Pet. 1

thy Vocation and Election, St. Iohn the Apostle teacheth thee when he saith : *My little Children let vs not loue in worde nor in tongue : but in deede and truth.* For Charity is a vertue with which none shall be damned, & without which none shall be saued. And it is shewed by the Workes, to witt, when one doth giue almes to the poore, or forgiue his enemies, for the true loue of God and his neighbour; and not for hope of temporall reward; or for inordinate loue to the Creature.

And because it is not enough to begin well : *But hee that shall perseuer to the end, he shall be saued :* Therefore the Apostle saith : *Labour*, That is, atten-

1 Ioh. 3

Math. 10

attentiuely, carefully, and diligently follow the businesse of your Eternall saluation.

And truly there is no signe more probable of Gods election, then when a man (being more carefull of his saluation then of any other thing) prayeth continually vnto God for the giue of true repentance, true humility, perfect charity and perseuerance vnto the end : and not being content with prayer onely, striveth also all he can to seeke and finde *The Kingdome of*

Math, 6

*Heaven and the iustice thereof.* As our Saviour doth exhort.



THE

THE FOURETEENTH  
STEEPP,

*From the Consideration of  
Gods mercie.*

**T**He holy Ghost doth in  
holy scripture meruey-  
lously commend the  
mercy of God; in so  
much that he doubteth not to  
extoll it aboue all Gods  
workes: For so saith the  
Prophet David: *Our Lord is  
sweete to all: and his commise-  
rations are ouer all his workes.*  
we shall easily descerne the  
greatnesse of this diuine at-  
tribute, if we consider some-  
what attentiuely, the breadth,  
length, highth, & depth, therof.  
The

Cap. 3

Psal. 144

The breadth of Gods mercy is scene in that he onely can take away all miseries, and from all creatures he taketh away some for the loue he beareth them, and not for any profit to himselfe. Creatures indeed can take away some miseries : as bread hunger, drinke thirst, cloathes nakednesse, knowledge ignorance, and so of the rest : but no creature can take away all miseries.

Moreouer, there are some miseries the greater, the more secret and inward they are, which God onely can remedie. Such are the subtile deceates of the Devils who are many, mighty, and much incensed against vs. Such also  
are

are the errors of our minde and conscience, which we in our selues see not: But oftentimes are deceaued, thinking our selues very sound when as indeede when we are very sicke.

Who can deliuer vs from these miseries, but onely our Almighty phisition? And he also doth often mercifully deliuer vs from them without our knowledge: for which cause we all may iustly be said vnkinde to God, as our Lord himselfe doth witnesse when he saith: *That his heauenly Father is Beneficiall vpon the vnkinde and the euill.* For we scarcely knowe the least part of Gods benefits, and therefore we thanke him not  
for

Luk. 6

for them with such deuotion and humilitie as we ought. Creatures moreouer cannot take away all miseries but onely a fewe : nor from all but from a few: but God can take away all miseries from all : and albeit he doe not so ; yet there is none but is in some sort partaker of his mercie.

Phil. 3: Truly therefore saith the Prophet : *The earth is full of the mercie of our Lord.* The Church also in her prayer saith: *O God to whom it is proper to haue mercie, &c.* For he can take away miserie properly who wanteth misery : and he can take away all miseries from all, who wanteth all miserie :  
And



And that is God onely, who is a pure Act whose Essence is Happinesse.

O my soule if thou couldest conceaue what the life of thy God is, which is exalted aboue all miserie and is Happinesse it selfe: How wouldest thou sigh from thy hart to be in the bosome thereof, that of thee it might also be said: *There shall no euill come to thee; and scourge shall not approach to thy Tabernacle.* But thou wilt say: If God can take away all miseries from all thinges, why doth he not, since he is *The Father of mercies* to wit a most mercifull Father? Why are there so many miseries in mankinde, vnder

*Psal, 90*

*2 Cor. 1:*

vnder the gouernment of the Father of mercies? Why also is it said: *The earth is full of the mercy of our Lord*, And not *e contra*, *The earth is full of all miserie*? God truly can take away all miseries: yet he onely taketh away those which his wisdom iudgeth fitt to be taken away. But his wisdom iudgeth it not expedient for men that all should be taken away: For it is mercie sometimes not to take away some miserie that greater mercie might afterward be shewed.

2 Cor, 12 The Apostle prayed thrice to our Lord *That the pricke of the flesh might be taken from him*, and he was not heard, *Because power is perfected in infirmitie.*

*infirmities.* God tooke not from *Lazarus* the misery of pouertie and sores, that with greater mercie he might be carried by the Angels into *Abrahams* bosome. And how should the rich exercise the workes of mercie if none were poore, hungry, thirstie, naked, sicke, Pilgrimmes and imprisoned? And if there were not tentations nor combats with deuils, where were the crownes of virgins and confessors? If also there were no labours and dolours where were the Crowne of patience? And if there were no persecutors where were the Crowne of Martyres? Therefore it is true, that in this banishment the earth is full of

Luk, 16

of miseries ( For sinnes onely are great miseries ) And it is also true that *The earth is full of the mercie of our Lord:* because the conuersion of sinners , the merittes of Saintes, and other almost infinite benefitts of God both spirituall and temporall, are nothing els but the great and continuall mercies of God our Creator. Let vs therefore give thanks to him, *I hat as in this Pilgrimage our Tribulations abound, so also by his mercy our consolation doth abound: Lord by mercie is in heauen saue David.* For there sha'll be mercy without miserie, because mercy shall take away all miserie whatsoever.

2 Cor. 1

Psal. 35

The

The length also of his mercy is Longanimitie or patience which the Scripture vseth to ioyne with mercy as a part thereof. For so speaketh David : *Our Lord is pittifull and mercifull : Long suffering and very mercifull.* And againe *Our Lord is pittifull and mercifull, patient and very mercifull.* Truly the Longaminie and patience of God toward mankinde is admirable : the like whereof we finde neither in masters toward their seruants, nor in parentes toward their children, albeit they both are men. And first God is long suffering toward sinners, expecting them with vncredible patience, sometime from their first childhood

psal. 102

psal. 144

Act. 14

1 pet. 3

childe-hood to their last old age, permitting them to blaspheme his name, & to breake his Lawe; And in the meane while Being beneficiall to them from heauen, giuing raynes and fruitefull seasons, filling their hartes with foode and gladnesse as the Apostle speaketh. And what master or parent is there among men so mercifull and gentle, who seeing himselfe a long time iniured and condemned by his seruant or childe, would not at length put them out of his house? Yet is not the mercy of God ouercome by the malice of men: But he doth patiently, not willing that any perish, but that all returne to penance as St. Peter affirmeth in his Epistle.

Epistle. And the wise man  
saith : *Thou hast mercy on all*  
*O Lord dissembling sinnes for*  
*repentance.*

Wisd. 11

Moreouer, this patience  
seemeth yet greater in that  
many sinners being by Gods  
grace brought out of the lake  
of miserie, and from the mire  
of dreggs, and of the children  
of darkenesse made the chil-  
dren of light, and called from  
the guiltinesse of eternall  
death, to the adoption of the  
children of God and hope of  
heauen: fall notwithstanding  
backe againe oftentimes to  
their former vncleannesse and  
vnthankfulnesse. Yet are  
they not forsaken by the lon-  
ganimitie of God; but most  
louingly expected and invited  
to

Psal, 39

Luke 15

Math, 18

to repentance : And if they trueiy repent : as Prodigall sonnes they are receaued by their most mercifull Father to the kisse of peace, and to their former dignities. St. Peter demanding of our Saujour if he should forgiue his brother offending against him vntill seauen times? He answered: *I say not to thee vntill seauen times, but vntill seauentie times seauen times.*

For that course which he vseth in forgiuing offences, the same would he haue vs vse also : but he hath set downe no certaine time for reconciliation but the terme of this life. As long as a sinner liueth although it be an hundred yeares or more and often



often falleth backe : yet is he  
receiued and pardoned by his  
most mercifull Father. For  
there is no repentance to late  
with the mercy of God, so it  
be truely from a contrite  
heart : Yet none ought to a-  
buse Gods mercy and deferre  
their conuersion from day to  
day, because none knoweth  
at what day or in what houre  
he shall dye, and appeare be-  
fore the Tribunall of the most  
iust Iudge. Yea rather all  
ought by this so great and in-  
credible goodnesse of God to  
come vnto repentance : For  
if God be so mercifull to sin-  
ners that often fall : What  
will he be to those which ha-  
uing once tasted the Sweet-  
nesse of his grace, can neuer

Z

after

after by any temptations be  
seperated from it?

There is also another Longanimity of God exceeding admirable and amiable, which he useth in suffering the offences of the righteous. For albeit God of his infinite mercy hath made vs of slaues his children and friends, and of persons condemned to eternall death, heyres of his Kingdome : yet such is our ingratitude that daily we render him euill for good.

Iam, 2 For if Saint *James* the Apostle said : *In many things we all offend*, what may wee say, which are so farre from the Apostles perfection? Beholde wee speake in prayer to God, and on the suddain

suddaine we are carryed away by the imagination to thinke of other thinges, and to turne as it were our backes to God.

What maister in the world would suffer his seruantes which stand in his presence and speake to him, to turne away on the suddaine, and neglecting him to prattle with their fellow seruantes? What shall I say of idle wordes? Of vaine thoughts? Of fruitlesse workes? Of excesse in eating, drinking, sleeping and playing? Of negligence in holy thinges? Of omission of brotherly correction? And of innumerable other such like wherein we daily All offend? And

Psal, 85

August. in  
psal, 83

yet our God *Is sweete and milde, and of much mercy to all that innocate him.* He suffereth these Follyes and rude inciuilties ( as I may call them ) in his children, which truely Men will not suffer in men. This St. *Austen* noteth in his Treatise vpon the eighty three Psal. expounding those wordes : *O Lord thou art sweet and milde,* where he bewaileth mans infirmity concerning the distractions of his minde in time of prayer, and magnifieth the mercy of God in suffering so many iniuries of his seruants. But he knoweth whereof we are made, and therefore dealeth with vs as a mother doth with her childe, whom she cherisheth & nourisheth

risheth al:though perhappes it  
strike her. But albeit God  
suffreth so many of our offen-  
ces without breaking y<sup>e</sup> bond  
of loue, or depriuing vs of the  
right of our inheritance : yet  
will he not leaue them unpun-  
ished at y<sup>e</sup> day of Iudgement,  
when as wee must render to  
him an accompt for *Our idle*  
*wordes*, vnlesse he finde them  
purged before by teares, pray-  
ers, or some other kinde of sa-  
tisfaction. And least thou my  
soule perhappes mayst thinke  
these offences light, and ther-  
fore decciue thy selfe and  
neglect to amend them:  
Heare what Saint *Bonaventure*  
writeth in the life of St. *Fran-*  
*cis. Grauius se putabat offen-*  
*dere &c. Greatly* (saith he) *did*

In eius  
vit. c. 10

he thinks hee offended, if being at his Prayers his minde wandered after vayne phantasies. When any such thing happened, hee spared not Confession but forthwith made satisfaction. This course hee practised so often, that seldome was he troubled with those molestations. Once in a time of Lent he had made a little Basket, to passe away some short vacation without being altogether unoccupied; which coming to his minde when he said his Houres, did somewhat distract it: Wherefore being moued with zeale of Spirit, hee burned the basket saying: I will sacrifice it to God, whose Sacrifice is hundred.

There.

Therefore distraction of minde in time of Prayer and praising God, is not so small an offence as many imagine: but great is the Mercy and Longanimitie of God, in that hee is no more angry, nor presently punisheth & therefore.

Next followeth the *Height of Gods Mercy*, which is taken from the cause moouing God to mercy. And truly it is most High, and exalted aboue all the Heauens according to that of the Psalmes: *Lord thy mercy is in Heauen, And, Mercy shall be built vp for ever in the Heauens.*

Cap. 3

Psal. 35

Psal. 88

Some men haue mercy of other men, because they need their helpe: and this indeed

is the lowest degree of mercy : for it goeth not beyond private commodity : After which manner we also haue compassion of our Horses, Dogges, and Cattle.

Others haue mercy by reason of Consanguinity or friendship, to witt, because they are their Children, Brothers, Familiars, or Friendes : and this degree is a little higher, and beginneth to haue the Forme of a vertue.

Lastly others haue mercy because they are their neighbours, to wit men as they are, made by the same God, and of the same molde. And therefore they respect not whether they be their friends or enimaies, good or euill,

Cour-



country-men or strangers:  
but they take compassion of  
all whom they know created  
according to Gods Image:  
and this is the highest degree  
of mercy to which mortall  
men can ascend

But God hath mercy vpon  
all thinges, because they are  
his Creatures: and especially  
vpon men because they are  
his Images: And more espe-  
cially vpon the righteous, be-  
cause they are his Children,  
heyres of his Kingdome, and  
coheyres of his *Onely begotten*  
*Sonne.*

But if thou aske why God  
created the world? Why hee  
made man to his likenesse?  
Why he iustificth the wicked,  
and adopteth them to be his

Children, and heyres of his Kingdome? Nothing can be answered, but because he so would? And why would he so, but because he is Good. For *Goodnesse is liberall, and doth willingly bestow it selfe.*

Psal, 88

*Mercy therefore is built up in Heauen, and from a most high habitation, to wit, from the Heart of the Highest, she descended to the Earth and filled it, as was foretolde by the Prophet: The earth is full of the mercy of our Lord.*

Psal, 32

Lift vp now my soule the eyes of thy minde to that most high fountaine of *mercy.*

Consider the absolute purity thereof, not mixed with any intention of private commodity. And when thou hearest  
the

the Maister of all, exhorting  
and saying : *Be yee therefore  
mercifull, as also your Father is  
mercifull*; endeauour all thou  
canst to haue compassion of  
thy fellow seruants, with that  
pure affection wherewith thy  
Heauenly Father hath com-  
passion of vs. If thou for-  
giue an iniury, forgiue it with  
a true heart, and commit to  
perpetuall forgetfulnesse eue-  
ry offence : For Our Father  
forgetteth our offences as the  
Prophet Ezechuell writeth,  
And As farre as the East is di-  
stant from the West, doth he  
make our iniquities farre from  
vs, as David speaketh. If  
thou giue an Almes to the  
poore : make account thou  
dost rather receiue then giue:

Luk. 6

Ezech. 18

Psal. 113

Z 6 Because

Pro. 19

*Because hee lendeth our Lord that hath mercy on the poore. Giue it therefore with humi-ty and reuerence, not as an Almes to the poore : but as a giust to a Prince. If thou suffer any discommodity to benefit thy poore neighbour: thinke yet how larre thou comcest short of thy Lord, who to benefite thee gaue his bloud and life. So shalt thou without hope of earthly reward, & without any motion of vaine glory, meerly for the loue of God & thy neighbour profite in the vertue of mercy.*

Cap. 4

*It remaineth that we consider the Depth of Gods mercy: For as the height thereof appeareth chiefly in the cause, so the Depth thereof is seene especi-*

especialy in the effect. That mercy therefore is not said to be deepe, but rather shallow and superficiall which descendeth but to wordes onely: That deeper, which comforteth the needy not onely with wordes, but also with deeds. That most deepe, which not onely with wordes and deedes comforteth them: but also endureth laboures and dolours for their sakes. God therefore (whose mercie is infinite) hath beene mercifull vnto vs after all these manners. For first he sent vs letters of comfort, to wit, the holy Scriptures whereof the *Machabies* speake: *We haue for our comfort the holy Bookes that are in our handes.*

Mach. 12

Neither

2 Cor, 4

Psal, 84

Neither doth he speake to  
to vs by letters onely ; but  
also by the Sermons of Prea-  
chers *Which are Legates of*  
*Christ*, and by inward inspira-  
tions promising vs his helpe  
and protection. *I will beare*  
*(saith David ) what our Lord*  
*will speake in me, because he*  
*will speake peace vpon his peo-*  
*ple, and vpon his Saintes, and*  
*vpon them that are conuerted to*  
*the hart.*

Psal, 102

Secondly, the benefits of  
Gods mercies against our  
manifold miseries both spiri-  
tuall and temporall are so ma-  
ny, that they cannot be num-  
bred. For euery where *He*  
*crowneth vs in mercie, and*  
*commiserations.* That is, he  
compasseth vs about euery  
where

where with the benefits of his mercie.

Thirdly, Gods mercie descended by the myserie of the holy Incarnation, to labours and dollours, to hunger and thirst, to ignominies and reproches, to stripes and woundes, and to the death of the Crosse to redeeme vs from our sinnes, and from eternall death due vnto vs therefore. Is there any greater depth to which Gods mercy did descend? Yes surely: For he did all these thinges not of dutie but out of Loue. *He was offered* (saith the Prophet) *because himselfe would.* For who compelled the sonne of God *Who thought it no robbery. himselfe to be equall to the Father,*

Isay, 53

phil. 2

*Father, but he exinanited himselfe, taking the forme of a ser-*  
 2 Cor, 8 *uant? To be made poore for vs,*  
 Phil, 2 *that by his poverty we might be*  
*rich? To be humbled vnto*  
*death, even the death of the*  
*Crosse to exalt vs? Truly loue*  
*onely compelled him, mercy*  
*onely constreyned him. It*  
*also descendeth yet farther.*  
*For he would in the worke, of*  
*our saluation bestowe on vs*  
*honour and glorie. That*  
 Luk, 2 *diuision which the Angels*  
*made seemed very fit: Glory*  
*in the highest to God, and in*  
*earth peace: honour be to*  
*God, and profit to men:*  
*But Gods mercie would*  
*haue all the profite to be*  
*ours, and part of the glo-*  
*rie to be his, and part of*  
 it



it to be ours. For he would  
giue vs his grace, whereby  
we might worke our saluati-  
on: Not that the merit of  
Christ sufficed not; but to  
communicate with vs the  
praise and glory of our owne  
saluation. Wherevpon it is  
said in the Gospell; *Pay them  
their hyre.* And the Apostle  
glorifieth saying: *There is  
layd up for me a Crowne of  
Iustice.*

Math. 20

1 Tim, 4

Lastly, Gods mercie is  
most deepe, because it ex-  
ceedeth the affection of  
Fathers and Mothers, which  
is the greatest we can  
finde on earth. Heare the  
Prophet *Isay*: *Can a wo-  
man forget her infant  
that shee will not haue  
pittie*

Isay 49

psal, 101

pittie on the sonne of her wombe?  
 and if she should forget, yet  
 will not I forget thee. Heare  
 David: As a Father hath  
 compassion of his children; So  
 hath our Lord compassion on  
 them that feare him. And  
 lett thou mightest say; there  
 are some parents whose loue  
 sometime changeth into ha-  
 tred, David saith further of  
 Gods mercie and loue to-  
 ward his Children: The mercy  
 of our Lord from euerlasting  
 upon them that feare him. Of  
 which continuance, the A-  
 postle also certifieth vs in his  
 last Epistle to the Corinthi-  
 ans where he calleth God:  
 The Father of mercies, and God  
 of all Consolation. God therefore  
 is not onely a father to those  
 that

2 Cor, 1

that feare him : but a most  
mercifull Father : For he taketh  
away such miseries and  
afflictions from his Children  
as he iudgeth expedient to be  
taken from them : and therein  
he sheweth himselfe to be  
the Father of mercies : And  
giueth them vnspeakeable  
comfort to suffer those, which  
he iudgeth not expedient for  
them to be taken away : And  
therein he sheweth himselfe  
to be *The God of Consolation*.  
But the Apostle saith: (*Of all  
Consolation*) for two causes.

First because God comforteth  
those that are his, in all  
kindes of tribulations, which  
truely the world cannot doe:  
for oftentimes it vnderstandeth  
not the causes of tribulations:

Job, 16

lations : Euen as *Jobs* friendes  
*Were heavy Comforters* as he  
 calleth them, because they  
 knew not the cause of his  
 grieve, and therefore applyed  
 the remedy where they ought  
 not : or els for that the tribu-  
 lation is sometime so great,  
 that no earthly consolation  
 can equall it. But God the  
 almighty and most skilfull  
 Phisition, can cure every in-  
 firmitie, and therefore the A-  
 postle saith : *Who doth com-*  
*fort us in all our tribulation.*  
 Moreover, he is called the  
 God of all Consolation, be-  
 cause he comforteth so fully,  
 that it were better to suffer  
 tribulations with such a com-  
 forter, then to want them  
 both together, as it happened

2 Cor. 1

to a young man called *Theodorus*, (a confessor in the Persecution of *Julian* the *Apostata*) who being tortured ten houres together with such crueltie, and change of executioners as in no age is reported the like : Sung notwithstanding all that while with great ioy the psalmes of *David* : and when it was commaunded he should be let downe; he began to be sorrowfull, because of the great comfort he receiued by the presence of an Angell whilest he was in torturing as *Ruffinus* writeth. Wherefore it is no meruaile if the Apostle say : *I am replenished with consolation : I doe exceedingly abound in ioy in all our tribulation*

lib. 10.  
hist. c. 36  
2 Cor. 7

1 Cor, 1

tribulation. And in the beginning of his Epistle: *Who comforteth vs in all our tribulation, that we also may be able to comfort them that are in all distresse.*

What thinkest thou O my soule of this so ample, continuall, pure, and infinite mercy of our Lord, who needeth nothing of ours; and yet out of the abundance of his loue is so carefull of his seruants, as if of them depended all his Happineffe? What thanks therefore wilt thou giue him? What canst thou euer doe, not to be vngratefull to so great mercy? Seeke therefore all thou canst to please him. And because it is written: *Be yee mercifull, as also your Father is merciful.*

Luk. 6

*mercifull.* And, *Haue mercy*  
*on thine owne soule; leasing God,*  
Begin diligently first to finde  
out the miseries of thy soule:  
For the miseries of the body  
are plaine to the eye, so that it  
is needlesse to put a man in  
minde of them: For if the  
body be but one day without  
meate and drinke, or one  
night without sleepe, or by a  
fall or wound be hurt; it pre-  
sently cryeth out and com-  
plaineth, and is with great  
care looked vnto. But the  
soule fasteth whole weekes  
from her meate, and is sicke  
with woundes, or perhapps  
dead: and none taketh care  
or compassion of her. Visite  
therefore thy soule often: ex-  
amine all her powers whether  
they

psal, 6

they be well, and profit in the knowledge and loue of true Happinesse: or whether they be sicke with ignorance, or languish with diuers desires. Also whether the minde be blinded with malice, or the will infected with enuy and pride. And if thou finde any such thing: Crye vnto our Lord; *Haue mercy on me because I am weake.* Seeke spirituall phisitions, and apply fit remedies. Take compassion likewise of other soules, whereof an infinite number perish, although Christ dyed for them.

O my soule, if thou didst truely knowe the price of soules, to wit the precious blood of the sonne of God;  
and



and also the great slaughter which is made of them by the infernall Wolues and roaring Lyons the Deuills : Surely thou couldest not, but from thy hart take pittie on them : and by thy prayers to God, and by all other meanes seeke to deliuer them.

Lastly also take compassion on the corporall necessities of thy neighbours not in word and tongue onely, but in deede and truth, hauing in minde the saying of our Lord: *Blessed are the mercifull, for they shall obtaine mercy.*

1 Ioh. 3

Matt. 5



THE FIFTEENTH AND  
LAST STEPP,

*From the Consideration of the  
greatnesse of Gods iustice by  
the similitude of a corpo-  
rall quantitie.*

Cap. I

**G**ODS iustice in holy  
Scripture is taken foure  
wayes: First for iustice  
ingenerall, which con-  
teyneth all vertues, and is the  
same with Sanctitie or probi-  
tie. So in the psalmes: Our  
psal. 144 *Lord is iust in all his wayes, and  
hol'y in all his workes.*

Secondly, for truth or fide-  
litie. So in another psalme:  
psal. 50 *That thou mayst be iustified in  
thy wordes.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, for iustice distributing rewardes : so in the last Epistle to *Timothie*; There is layd up for me a Crowne of iustice, which our Lord will render to me in that day, a iust iudge. 1 Tim, 4

Lastly, for iustice punishing sinne. So in another psalme; He shall rayne snares upon sinners, fire and Brimstone and blast of stormes, the portion of their cupp, because our Lord is iust, and hath loved iustice. The greatnesse therefore of Gods iustice wil appeare to vs, if we consider the breadth thereof, in generall; the length thereof, to wit, his truth and fidelitie: the high thereof, distributing rewardes in heaven; and the depth thereof, punishing the wicked. Psal, 10

wicked eternally in Hell. And to begin from the breadth; That is called iustice ingenerall among men, which disposeth a man to behaue himselfe well in all actions according to all lawes. And in this all vertues as well Theologicall as Moral are comprehended. There is also another vertue called Charitie which conteyneth all vertues in her bosome, and commaundeth and directeth all their actes vnto their endes. Which although it be a particular Theologicall vertue: yet it may truely be called likewise iustice ingenerall. For it disposeth a man to behaue himselfe well towards God and his neighbour, and in so doing

doing he fulfilleth all lawes.  
So speaketh the Apostle: *Love*  
*worketh no evil.* And, *He that*  
*loveth hath fulfilled the lawe,*  
And, *Love is the fulfille of the*  
*Lawe.* St. *Augustine* also in  
his booke of Nature and  
Grace sayth: *Imperfect Charitie*  
*is imperfect iustice, Charitie*  
*increased is iustice increased:*  
*great Charitie, is great Iustice.*  
*perfect Charitie, is perfect iustice.*

Rom, 13

Moreover, in God are all  
vertues without any imper-  
fection; and in lieu of them  
which may presuppose im-  
perfection; there is something  
much better & more excellēt:  
for which cause he is most tru-  
ly called *The onely good, & one-  
ly holy.* Faith therefore is not in  
God a Theologicall vertue,

because Faith is of those things which are not seene : But God seeth all things. Neither is their hope in God : because hope is an expectation of things to come : but God expecteth nothing ; for hee possesseth all things from eternitie. Neither is there in God repentance for sinne : because God cannot sinne. Nor Humilitie ; for Humilitie keepeth a man that he ascend not vainely aboue himselfe, but continue in his estate ; but God hath nothing aboue himselfe, because he is most High. Yet Charitie (the Queene of vertues) is in God most ample & truly infinite. For he loueth himselfe infinitely, because himselfe onely perfectly

perfectly knoweth, the infinite goodnesse of his Essence. He loueth also all thinges he hath made; so speaketh the Wise man: *Thou louest all thinges that are, and hatest nothing of those which thou hast made.* For God by his wisdom knoweth how to sepe- rate euill from good, to wit, defect from nature, euen in the Deuils & in the most wicked; And he loueth nature which he made, & hateth defect which he made not. Furthermore there is such true Charity in God, that himselfe would be called Charitie, as St. Iohn speaketh when he saith; *God is Chrritie.* But our loue being compared with Gods loue is exceeding small

Wisd. 1

Ich. 4

For many thinges we loue not, because we knowe them not: Many thinges also which we knowe, we loue not, because we decerne not in them good from euill: many good thinges likewise we loue not well, and therefore not with true charitie, because we are naught and follow rather lust then loue. And we loue God vnperfectly, not onely because we loue him not so much as his goodnesse doth deserue (which neither the Angels doe) but also because we loue him lesse then we ought, and lesse also then we might if we did with more attention and diligence giue our selues to prayer and Meditation.

This



This Queene of vertues in the Lord of vertues is accompanied with singular magnificence, infinite liberalitie, incredible benignitie and humilitie, admirable patience and longanimitie, most abundant mercie and pietie, euermore lasting truth and fidelitie, perfect iustice, and most vnspeotted sanctitie, so that

*The Starres are not cleane* Iob, 25  
*in his sight; And the Sera-*  
*phims being astonished crye,*  
*Hail, holy, holy, the Lord God* I say 6  
*of hostes.*

O my soule if thou didst consider these things attentiaely, with what feare and trembling wouldst thou serue God in thy deuotions and prayers?

And especially at the holy Altar, with what reuerence & humilitie wouldest thou offer vp to the eternall Father his onely begotten Sonne, in the sight of Angels, for the health of the quicke and dead?

Cap. 2

But let vs go on. The length of Gods iustice is manifested by the truth & fidelitie therof:

Psal, 144

*Our Lord is faithfull in all his wordes* saith the Prophet, That is, The promises of God which were declared many ages since by the Prophets, neuer were, nor shall be frustrate: but more firme and stable then heauen and earth. For so saith our Lord: *It is easier for heauen and earth to pass, then ore tittle of the lawe to fall.*

Luk 16

And

And our Lord meaneth by the Lawe, not onely the truth of his Commandements, but also of his promises : For whatsoever he hath commaunded must be obserued, or punishment followeth : and whatsoever he hath promised is by eternall truth established and performed. Wherevpon he also saith : *Heauen and earth shall passe, but my wordes shall not passe.* And I say : *The word of our Lord abideth for ever.* And David : *All his Commandements are faithfull : Confirmed for euer and euer.* And the Apostle : *But God is true, and every man a Lier.* And *It is vnpossible for God to lye.*

Math, 5

I. y 40

Psal. 110

Rom, 3

Heb. I

A a 6

The

The reason of which sayings is, because being Wisdome he cannot be deceaued : being goodnesse he cannot deceaue : and being Omnipotencie he cannot faile : But men , although they be wise, good and mightie : may be deceaued, and deceaue : because they neither knowe all thinges , nor can performe all thinges as they will: they also that are good when they promise ; may soone after become euill , and not fulfill their promise.

Therefore if thou be wise my soule, trust onely in God; cleaue onely to him, and vpon him cast all thy care.

*Walke*

*Walker thou carefully with thy Lord God, and hee will be carefull of thee: Take heed all thou canst, least thou offend his Iustice, and his mercy will alwayes so defend thee, that thou shalt not neede to feare what man or deuill can doe to thee.*

Mich. 6

The Height of Gods iustice is scene in giuing the reward of Heauen, which God (as the Highest and most iust Iudge) hath prepared for them that haue liued righteously.

Cap. 3

And first, we shall decerne the Greatnesse of his Iustice, if wee compare God as a Iudge, with men that are Iudges.

Secondly, if we compare rewards with rewardes, to wit &  
rewardes

rewards which God will giue with those which men vse to giue. Men that are Princes, Prelates or Iudges, and haue vnder them subiectes or seruantes, for the most part, giue not for many causes iust Rewards to those that deserue them. For either they cannot through want of ability giue to all according to their desertes: or they know not all their desertes: or they knowe not their true worth which dependeth vpon the sincerity and affection of their mindes: or through couetousnesse and malice, or some other peruerse inclination they will not iustly reward their iust labours: Or lastly, they are either preuented by death before

before they can pay the recompence which they owe : or they to whome it is due, depart out of this life before they begin to tast the fruits of their trauailes: But God giueth the righteous not onely iust rewards for their good workes, but also aboue their deserts. For what desert can be more base and obscure, then to giue a cup of cold water to one that is a thirst ? And yet for it also hath God promised a reward. And of the large rewards which our Lord hath promised Saint Luke writeth : *Good measure, and pressed downe, and shaken together, and running ouer shall they giue into your bosoms.* Neither is it to be feared least God should

Math. 10

Luk. 6

should want any thing to giue for reward vnto the righteous, since hee is the Lord of all thinges, and can by his worde onely, increase and multiply them without end.

Nor is it to be doubted, lest perhaps he be deceiued in the true number & value of their desertes: since hee is most Wise & beholdeth all things; searching the Harts & reynes of his well deseruing seruants to see with what munde, intention, zeale and diligence they doe all thinges. Neither may it be thought, that God hath an ill meaning to defraude his children and seruantes of their due recompence, because he is faithfull in all his wordes.

Lastly,



Lastly, neither can he dye, because he is more immortall then any thing whatsoeuer: so that there is no danger lest by preuention of death they should be thereof deprived.

Certaine therefore it is that all the good workes of the righteous are with Iustice rewarded. Wherefore it is most safe to haue to doe with God in matter of labour and Reward: and dangerous to trust in men, and to expect from them true recompence for desert.

Let vs now compare rewardes with rewardes, thinges Cœlestiall & Diuine, with thinges Terrestriall and Humane.

O blindnesse of Men.

What

What I pray you can men render to those who labour all day, watch all night, and hazard their lives for them in battaile? What can they render but small, base, and abiect thinges, which shall continue but a short time? But God rendereth great, high, and eternall thinges: Yet are the other desired, and these contemned. *St. Iohn Chrysostome* in his foure & twentieth Homily vpon *St. Mathew*: Compareth the Pallaces, Cittyes, and Kingdomes of this world which men so admire, vnto houses of clay which Children make with great labour: but by those that are elder, they are laughed at: And oft times also when the father or maister

maister seeth his children to neglect their bookes, and giue themselves too much to those tryffles : he throweth downe all with his foot, and destroyeth in a moment, what they with great care, had a long time bin making : Euen so, the great Pallaces, Towers, Castles, Townes, Cittyes and Kingdomes of mortall men, are but as houses of clay, in comparison of Cœlestiall and Eternall riches, and are laugh- ed at by the blessed Angells which beholde them from a- boue, and oftentimes they are by our heauenly Father and Maister, ouer-throwne in a moment, that wee may thereby vnderstand how vaine and of no moment all these things

things are. Which albeit few  
doe now obserue, yet at the  
day of Iudgment all shall see,  
when as the seeing thereof  
will little auayle them. Saint  
*Hillary* in his Comentary vp-  
on the tenth Chapter of Saint  
*Mathew* saith; *That the day*  
*of Iudgement will reueale how*  
*all these things were vaine.*

But let vs declare somewhat  
more particularly, what these  
heauenly rewardes are, which  
many now contemne in re-  
spect of earthly rewardes.

First, in the Kingdome of  
heauen, there shall be all good  
things that can be desired:  
for all y<sup>e</sup> liue there shall be hap-  
py: And happinesse is defined  
to be *A heape of all good things*  
*perfectly gathered together.*

There-

Therefore the goods of the minde shall be there, to witt, Wisdome and vertues : the goods of the body, to witt, beauty, health and strength : And externall goods, to wit wealth, pleasure and glory.

Moreover all these thinges shall be in a most high, perfect, and excellent degree : For God who hath shewed his Power in creating the world of nothing : and his wisdome in the order and gouernment thereof : and his Loue in the Redemption of man-kinde by the mystery of the incarnation and Passion of his Son : will then shew his glory and liberality in rewarding those which haue triumphed ouer their enemy the Deuill.

And

1 Ioh. 3

And there God shall not be  
 seene in his Creatures onely:  
 but in himselfe who is the  
 Cause of Causes, and the first  
 and Highest Cause: through  
 which most beautifull vision  
 the soules of Saintes shall  
 shine so bright that St. Iohn  
 speaking of that future Glory  
 saith: *Wee shall be like vnto  
 him, because we shall see him as  
 he is.* From this high Happi-  
 nesse shall proceed most fer-  
 uent Loue, whereby they shall  
 alwayes adhare vnto God in  
 such sort, that they neither  
 will nor can be seperated  
 from him.

So then the soule with all  
 her powers, shall remaine in a  
 most happy estate: And the  
 body shall shine as the Sunne

as our Lord himselfe doth  
witness: yea: *Then the first*  
*fruits as the Sonne in the*  
*Reign of their Father:* And  
thou shalt be the beauty there-  
of; the health thereof shall be  
immortality, and the strength  
impossibility. Lastly that  
which now is a Naturall bo-  
dy, shall then be a *Spiritual*  
*body*, that is to say, so obedi-  
ent to the Spirit, that it shall  
exceed the Windes in Agili-  
tie, and penetrate the Walls  
through Subtiltie. Moreo-  
ver, their Wealth there shall  
be to want nothing, because  
with God and in God they  
shall possesse all thinges. *For*  
*over all his goods shall bee ap-*  
*point them.*

Math. 15

2 Cor. 5

Mat. 24

Of their Pleasure what shall  
I say

Psal. 35

I say, since it is written: *They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house: and with the torrent of thy pleasure thou shalt make them drinke?* What minde can conceiue what pleasure it is to enioy the cheife Happinesse? To see beauty it selfe? To tast sweetnesse it selfe? To enter into the ioy of our Lord, that is, to be partakers of that pleasure which maketh God happy? The honour and glory of Saintes exceedeth all eloquence. For amidst the Theater of the whole world, of all men and Angels, the Saintes shall be praised by God and as Champions crowned, and (which is the highell honour of all) they shall be placed in Christ



Christes throne as partners of his kingdome. For so we read in the Apocalips: *He that shall overcome, I will giue him to sit with me in my throne, as I also haue overcome, and haue sitten with my Father in his throne.*

Apoc. 3

At this height of honour the Prophet wondred when he sayd: *But to me thy friendes O God are become honorab<sup>l</sup>: exceedingly: their principallitie is exceedingly strengthened.* And now if to this multiplicitie & excellencie of good things we add eternitie as an vnspeakeable Adiunct, who can conceaue the greatnesse of this heauenly felicitie? And yet what we now cannot conceaue in thought, we shall prooue in deede, if by our

Psal. 138

pious, righteous and sober life, we shall at length arrive vnto that happy country. For those goodes indeede shall continue for euer, which now with momentary labours Christes seruants purchase by his grace. What sayst thou O my soule to these thinges? Hadst thou rather immitate the sportes of children in making houses of clay then enioy an euerlasting kingdome? Hadst thou rather (which I abhorre to thinke) be delighted with the pleasures of beastes, then come to the ineffable delightes of Angels? Let thy mercy O Lord auert this from the soule of thy seruant. *Rather percer my flesh with thy feare, and let the obedience*

obedience of thy lawe be more sweete to me then hunny or the hunny Combe: that crucifying my flesh with the vices & concupiscences thereof I may aspire to the spirituall and eternall pleasures of thy Paradise. Graunt to thy seruant O Lord to follow the steppes of thy Christ, who being meeke and humble of hart *When he was reuyled, did not reuile: when he suffered he threatened not.* Grantt that I may liue soberly, righteously, and piously in this world, that with some confidence I may expect *The blessed hope, and aduent of the glory of the great God, and our Saniour Iesus Christ.*

1 Pet. 2

Tit. 2

Cap. 4

It remaineth that we con-

B b 2

sider

Heb. 10

Math. 12

sider the iustice which God will vse in punishing sinners in Hell. Wherefore if we make with attention and diligence; we shall indeede vnderstand that it is most true which the Apostile teacheth in his Epistle to the Hebrewes: *It is horrible to fall into the hands of the liuing God.* For (to follow that method we obserued in Iustice rewarding the merits of Saintes) God the iust iudge will punish all sinnes though neuer so small, as for example: an idle word, for so we read in the Gospell: *Euery idle word that men shall speake, they shall render an account for it in the day of iudgement.* Men truely leaue many offences unpunished, either because the offenders

offenders resist, or flye away :  
or because they knowe not  
whether they be done or not:  
or perhaps not sufficiently  
proved by witnesses whether  
they be done or not: or els be-  
cause: they will not punish  
them, being either corrupted  
with bribes, or oppressed with  
favours, or depraived with  
their owne malice. But God  
is Almighty: therefore none  
can resist his power: He is e-  
uery where: therefore nothing  
can be hidden from his sight.  
*Whether shall I goe (saith Da-  
uid) from thy spirit? And whe-  
ther shall I flee from thy face?  
If I shall ascend into heauen,  
thou art there; If I descend  
into hell, thou art present:  
He is most wise: and therefore*  
Bb 3 knoweth

Psal, 138

knoweth euery thing though neuer so secretly hidden in the hart. Neither doth he neede witnesses to proue offences, since mens consciences shall be against them as a thousand witnesses.

Lastly, no bribes can corrupt his iustice, since he wanteth no goods of ours. Certaine therefore it is that no sinne whatsoeuer can escape Gods iustice, vnlesse it be first purged by repentance. For as his mercie in this life is great in pardoning: so his iustice after this life will be seuerer in punishing. Of the time of this life the Prophet *Isay* speaketh: *In time acceptable I haue heard thee, and in the day of saluation I haue*

have holpen thee. Which the  
Aposlle expounding in his  
last Epistle to the Corinthi-  
ans saith : Behold now is the  
time acceptable, beholde now the  
day of saluation. Of the time to  
come after this life, the Pro-  
phet Sophomas cryeth out ;  
That day a day of wrath, a day  
of tribulation and distresse, a day  
of calamitie & miserie, a day of  
darknesse and myst, a day of  
Clowde and Whirle-winde, a  
day of the Trumpet and sound.

2 Cor, 6

Sophon, 1

Neither shall all sinnes be  
punished onely ; but so horri-  
bly punished, that scarcely  
can any living man imagine  
it. For as no eye hath seene,  
nor eare hath heard, nor heart  
of man conceaued what God  
hath prepared for those that

1  
loue him: so no eye hath seene,  
nor eare hath heard, nor hart  
of man conceaued, what God  
hath prepared for those that  
hate him. The punishments  
of sinners in hell shall be ve-  
ry many, very great, and very  
pure, to wit, mixed with no  
comforts, and (which doth  
infinitely increase their mis-  
eries) euillasting. I say they  
shall be very many, because e-  
uery power of the soule, and  
euery sence of the body shall  
be tormented. Weigh the  
wordes of the highest iudges  
sentence, set downe in the  
Gospell: *Get ye away from  
me you cursed into fire euers-  
lasting, Get ye away* (saith he)  
that is depart yee from the  
company of the blessed, being  
for

Mat. 25



foreuer deprived of the sight  
of God, which is the highest  
essential happinesse & last end  
for which ye were created.  
*Renewed*, that is, Hope not  
hereafter for any benediction:  
for ye are deprived of the life  
of grace, and all hope of sal-  
uation: the water of wisdom,  
& dewe of diuine inspirations  
shall not hereafter raine vpon  
you: the beames of heauenly  
light shall not hereafter shine  
vpon you: the grace of re-  
pentāce, & flower of Charitie,  
nor the fruits of good works  
shall not growe in you. *The*  
*Orient from as high*, shall  
neuer from henceforth visite  
you. Neither shall yee one-  
ly loose spirituall and eternall  
goods, But also corporall

Luk. I

Math. 21

and temporall ~~ye~~ yee shall  
have no riches, no delightes,  
no comfortes : but shall be  
like the Figg-tree, which  
being cursed by me withered  
presently from the roote all  
ouer. *Into Fire*, That is,  
Into the furnace of burning  
and vnquenchable fire, which  
shall not consume one mem-  
ber alone, but all the mem-  
bers together with horrible  
punishment. *Euerlasting*,  
That is, into a fire which is  
blowne by the breath of the  
Almightie, and therefore  
needeth no sewell to make it  
alwayes to burne : that as  
your fault shall still remaine,  
so your punishment shall for  
euer indure. Therefore the  
Prophet *Isay* most truely ex-  
claimeth

claimeth : Which of you can dwell with denouring fire? Which of you shall dwell with excreting beates? As if he should say, there is none that can patiently indure it : but with impatience, indignation, and desperation they are compelled to beare it against their wills. And he addeth : *Their worme doth not dye, and fire is not extinguished*; which words our Lord repeateth often in St. Marke For there shall be the *Worme* of conscience, & remembrance of this life; wherein they might easily if they would, haue escaped those punishments, & obteyned eternall ioyes. And least some might thinke that the damned receaue some comfort

say 33

Cap, 66

Mar, 9

Math, 22

fort by walking or remouing from place to place, heare what our Lord himselfe sayth : *Bynde his handes and feete, and cast him into vnter darkenesse : There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* Therefore those wretches hauing their handes and feet bound eternally, shall alwayes lye in the same place without the light of the Sun, Moone, or Starres, burning in flames of fire, weeping, lamenting and gnashing their teeth through rage and desperation. Neither shall they onely suffer most greuous paines . but also extreame want, disgrace, ignominie & confusion. For in a moment they shal loose their Pallaces, Fieldes,

Fieldes, Vineyards, Cattle, Cleathes, Gold, Siluer, & precious stones: and be brought to such misery, that with the rich glutton they shall desire a drop of colde water, & shall not be heard. Moreouer, those proude & vaine glorious men, w in this life would suffer no disgrace: But preferred their honour and estimation before all thinges whatsoeuer: shall in that Theater of all mankinde, and of all the Angells (then the which a greater neuer was nor shall be) see all their offences reuealed, although they were done in darknesse, and kept in the closet of their heartes: As Treasons, Thestes, Incestis, Sacriledge and the like. For

Luk, 16

1 Cor. 4

as the Apostle saith in his first Epistle to the Corinthians: *When our Lord shall come to Iudge the world, he will lighten the hidden thinges of darkenesse, and will manifest the counsellis of the hearts, and then the praise shall be to euery man of God.*

And then without doubt the dispraise shall also be to euery wicked and vnrighteous man of God. But the disgrace and confusion of the wicked in that Theatre shall be so great, that St. *Basill* in his exposition of the three and thirtieth Psalme doubteth not to say: *That it shall be the greatest of all punishments: especially to Hypocrites, and to the proude and vaine glorious which accompred*

compted honour as a God, or rather as an Idoll in this world. But if these thinges which we haue said of the losse of all goods both Cœlestiall and Terrestriall, and of most vsufferable dolours, ignominies, & disgraces, were to haue end, or at least some kinde of comfort, or mittigation, as all miseries in this life haue; they might in some sort be thought tollerable: But since it is most certaine, and vndoubted, that as the happinesse of the blessed shall continue for euer without mixture of misery: so likewise shall the unhappinesse of the damned continue for euer without mixture of comfort: Truly therefore are they most  
blind

1 Cor. 4

blinde and foolish, which endeavour not all they may, through any tribulations, dangers, infamy and death (which the Apostle calleth *Momentary and light*) to come to the Kingdome of Heauen and happinesse thereof.

Cap. 5

And if perhappes any one wonder why God who is most mercifull : hath appointed such terrible and continuall punishments for mens finnes, which are soone passed over, and seeme not to be so great: Let him heare St. *Auster* in his bookes of the City of God:

Lib. 14  
cap. 15

*Quisquis huiusmodi damnationem &c. Whosoever* (saith he) *thinketh this condemnation too rigorous or uniuert, knoweth not true'y how to measure iniquity*  
in



in sinning, where there is such facility of sinning. And after: For who can sufficiently declare how wicked a thing it is, not to obey in a matter so easie, commanded by so great power, & threatened with so great punishment. St. Aquiline speaketh of Adams sin: but the same reason holdeth in all sinnes. For if we ballance it truely and not deceptually: we shall finde that every mortall sinne is exceeding great in 3. respects.

First it is a dreadfull thing that the Creature should not obey the Creator, seeing the dignity of the Creator is infinitely distant, from the baseness of the Creature. The Creature is also by nature the servant, & the Creator is by nature

ture & Lord; and whatsoever the creature hath it receiueth from the Creator: but the Creator receiueth nothing from it.

1 Ioh. I

Math. I

Secondly although the commandements of the Creator were heavy: yet ought the Creature to obey them: *But his Commandements are not heavy.* And our Saviour saith: *That his yoke is sweete, and burthen light.* How great an offence then is it for wormes of the earth not to obey their Creator in so easie a matter?

Thirdly if God had not threatned the punishment of eternall death vnto sinners: Men might perhaps have excused their sinnes: but seeing he hath so often and so plainly threatned it by his Prophets

phets and Apostles, what sinner can excuse his cōtumacy?

Lastly, if the sinne of the damned were not eternall, we might meruaile why the punishment thereof should be eternall: but seeing the abstinacy of the damned is eternal, why should wee wonder if their punishment be also eternall? And this wilfull obstinacy in wickednes & is both in the damned and in the Devils: I say this peruerse will which is in them auerted from God the cheife Happinesse, & shall so for euer remaine: maketh holy men more to feare a mortall sinne, then Hell fire. Heare what *Edmerus* an Englishmā writeth of St. *Anselme* in the 2. booke of his life:

*My*

My Conscience (saith he) beareth me witnesse I he not: That we haue often heard him (Anselme) to protest by the testimony of truth, That if hee might corporally beholde of one side the horror of Sinne, and of the other side the paines of Hell, and that of necessity he must be drowned in one of them, hee would rather choos: Hell then Sinne. Another thing he vsed like wise to say, which to some perhappes will seeme as strange as the former: To wit, That he had rather haue Hell without sinne, then the Kingdome of Heauen with sinne. If this holy man did both speake & feelee these thinges, for that (being illuminated by God) hee knew sin was more greuous then  
the

the paines of Hell: how much more will God (who penetra-  
teth the malice, vncleanesse,  
and peruersnes of sinne to the  
bottom) truly iudge, that the  
punishment which he hath ap-  
pointed from all eternity for  
sinne, is most due thereunto.

Therfore O my soule be not  
deceiued, be not seduced: be  
not like to those, *Who say they*  
*know God, but by their deeds de-*  
*ny him,* For many haue faith in  
habite; but not in acte, like a  
sworde in a scabbard. For if  
they did actually belecue, and  
beleueing did seriously consi-  
der that God is faithfull and  
iust, and hath indeed prepared  
most grieuous and euerslasting  
punishments without any  
mixture of comfort for the  
wicked

Tim. I 6

Iob. 15

2 Cor. 1

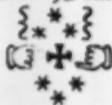
Psal. 93

wicked : It could not be that they would do y<sup>e</sup> thinges they doe *And drinke* (as it is said in the booke of *Iob*) *iniquity as water* ; To wit, so easily, so merrily, & so without feare comit many great sins, as if rewardes and not punishmentes were due vnto sinners. But belecue thou I say most assuredly, and belieuing oftē remember, that God is in this life *The Father of mercyes*, and ready mercifully to pardon the sins of all that truely repent : and y<sup>e</sup> after this life he will become *The God of Reuenge*, and execute the punishments he hath prepared for them, & by his Prophets and Apostles commaunded to be Preached, & comitted to writing for y<sup>e</sup> memory of posterity.

And

And in so doing it will come  
to passe, that being lifted vp as  
it were with two winges, to  
wit, the Feare of most intolle-  
rable punishments, & Hope of  
most great rewardes : thou  
maist passe ouer this life with  
safety, and come vnto the  
rest of life euerlasting.

*Amen, Amen :*



*Laus Deo qui dedit velle  
& perficere.*

The faulkes escaped in printing we  
trust the gentle Reader will of his  
curtesie easily amend and pardon.

FINIS.

12

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